# messing about in BOATS

Volume 31 – Number 1

May 2013

**Special Features This Issue**

Voices from the Past – Winter at the Tiki Hut

Both Oars in the Water – Wind, Water and Wood

*Alert* – *Charles W. Morgan*…Her 39th Voyage

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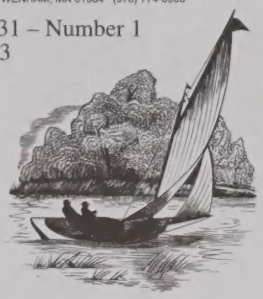

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# Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

Have you been following the sad tale of the *Bounty*? Hard to miss it as the mass media seized upon it as a disaster worthy of its fear mongering appetite. With the passage of time the media talking heads with their thrusting microphones have moved on while within the maritime world the real nitty gritty of what happened and why has come out through the report of the Coast Guard inquiry to determine if there was "any act of misconduct, inattention to duty, negligence or willful violation of the law?" If you'd like to read all about it have a look at: http://gcaptain.com/bounty-hearings-chief-mates-testifies/.

I was particularly interested in some of details which contributed greatly to the *Bounty's* demise. While the captain is seemingly regarded as displaying over the top hubris by heading out into the oncoming Superstorm Sandy, he "went down with his ship," figuratively if not literally, as his body has not been found, so he cannot be brought to account. In August he had told a TV reporter in Maine, "We chase hurricanes. You try and get up as close to the eye of it as you can, and you stay down in the southeast quadrant."

I was struck by the fact that he gave the crew option to go or not to go. All chose to go. Six of the 15 were not able seamen so maybe they had no idea what might be lying in wait for them. Was it fear of losing their places aboard? "Playing" sailorman on tall ships is a much desired opportunity.

I once sailed a short three hours onboard the schooner *Gloucester Adventure* many years ago prior to her being permanently docked for many, many years until she underwent lengthy and costly restoration. The crew were all volunteers, people who had worked long and hard for free on early upkeep to keep her afloat. They were having the times of their lives, their efforts had earned them sailing that glorious ship along the Cape Ann coastline in a fresh southwest breeze. Could failure to opt for going possibly have later lost *Bounty's* crew members their places on the crew? Or was it just peer group pressure?

The *Bounty* was described in the USCG review proceedings as "a wooden sailing ship of primitive build." A shipyard manager testified that during an overhaul of the ship in Maine last September, workers found widespread rot in the frames and planking. But only two planks were replaced and the rotting frames were simply covered with re-caulked planks. The caulking was reported to have been done with hardware store DAP household caulk. Scary!

The ship abounded in redundant backup equipment. It had two engines, four bilge pumps, four fuel tanks plus an emergency hand held gasoline pump. All had failed by the final hours as water coming onboard overwhelmed them. The engineer responsible for all these had joined the ship the month before and had no professional engineering credentials. Scary again.

The Coast Guard performed marvels of skill and courage rescuing the 13 survivors in still mountainous seas and high winds. The copters had to be constantly on the lookout for random towering waves that could swamp them should they drop too low in a rescue attempt and had limited time on the scene due to fuel limitations. And the rescue swimmers! Sure they're trained volunteers for this job, but what a task to face!

Which brings me to an underlying issue in all these rescues. People who choose to undertake dangerous actions such as this one and get into deep trouble end up putting the lives of those who must save them at risk and run up enormous financial costs borne by the public budget. We collectively underwrite the expense of general public safety as a sort of group insurance so that should disaster befall us we have folks at hand who are there to assist us. Unhappily this safety net extends to those who deliberately place themselves in the way of danger pursuing some selfish goal.

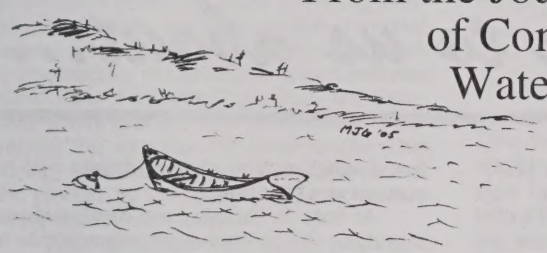
If they knew that rescue was gonna cost 'em it might discourage such irresponsible adventuring. This is what happened in New Hampshire's White Mountains where winter climbers/hikers know that if they need to be rescued from their own folly they'll get the bill. Too many fools were placing local volunteers who had to go get them off the mountains in winter storms at risk of life and limb. How to apply this approach to maritime rescues might be worth looking into.

U.S Coast Guard Photo

## On the Cover...

There's no end to the novelties that we get to see on these pages, this issue'scover courtesy of Dave Lucas from his Florida Tiki Hut Boatbuilding Shop. This boat is known locally as a "Camacat". Another look-in at the Tiki Hut doings is featured in this issue.

# From the Journals of Constant Waterman



By Matthew Goldman
Constantwaterman.com

At daybreak, it was nearly forty. At noon, it was pushing fifty. The water temperature was just a bit above freezing. The skin of ice on the Mystic River as I drove down the river road to Noank was just enough to support a few strutting gulls. I met my crew at the boatyard and we put *MoonWind* to rights. We had on our long johns and brought along coats and gloves.

A fellow sailor on the pier was busily checking his boat and those of his friends.

"Lovely day," I said.

"Yes," he replied. "In only another month, it'll be warm enough to sail."

"Think of that," I said. We hanked on the smaller of my Genoa jibs. It was blowing about twelve knots, but one never knows what treats await farther out. The tide would be high about two o'clock and the wind blew from the northwest. It made most sense to head toward the Race – normally a turbulent spot but at slack water nothing to worry about. We would have both the wind and tide to bring us home.

We motored out of the harbor and hoisted our sails beyond the mooring field – destitute of boats this month of the year. I handed the helm to my eager crew and he set a course for Little Gull Light, about nine miles away. The sailing was grand. We laid her over twenty degrees and rode the remaining tide for nearly two hours. We plowed through the Race – a little lumpy in places, but not rough enough for us to don our foul weather gear. The lighthouse at Little Gull Island is a cylindrical, granite tower eighty-one feet in height with a jaunty red cap. Its light shines ninety-one feet above the water. Its dolorous horn repeats until you fear it will raise the dead. If it did, we must have missed them.

Frankly, I was more concerned about being in the shade of the mainsail. By this time, I had the helm. The sun was bright – I shouldn't have to shiver. I fell off a point to the south and the avid sun came pouring into the cockpit. Life was perfect.

Little Gull Island is so small that, at a mile distant, you could fit the whole thing in your pocket. Of course, the aerial on the lighthouse would probably get caught in your trousers when you tried to take it out to return it to some impatient Coast Guardsman.

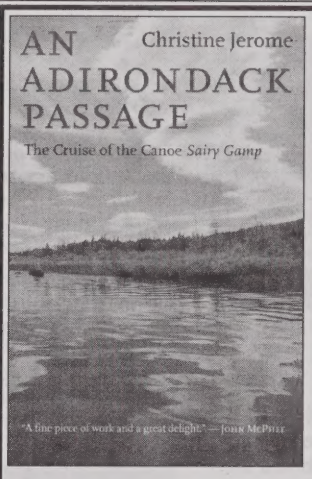
Great Gull Island, just beyond, is half a mile in length. It's a sanctuary for birds, and covered with observation stations and nesting towers. It has a pier on the north side and a couple of miniscule cottages, one of which was slipping into the sea. It seems the Race is intent upon removing tons of soil and stone from various parts of the island. Perhaps this is the same soil that our marina paid so much to have removed last year from our slips and channel. I trust the dredging barge made the twenty mile round trip to return it whence it came.

By the time we passed Great Gull it was time to come about and head for home. Florida would have to wait - at least until next weekend. The tide had turned; the wind was twelve to fourteen knots, occasionally gusting to twenty. What could be better? We tore through the Race, kindly avoided running under the Fishers Island Ferry leaving New London, and flew to West Cove with the molten sun baking our backs. Aside from a couple of fishing boats, we hadn't seen a soul.

"Bet you're the first one out of West Cove this season," said my crew.

"Don't count on it," I replied. Besides, each of us sailed our boat on the eighth of January. And two other sails from our marina were out in the Sound that day. Being first, or last, or somewhere between, has never been my goal. My goal is to sail whenever the spirit moves me. If the wind is willing to move my boat as well, so much the better.

I'm not a frostbite racer. Those are the folks who determine your standing by counting all the icicles in your beard. This number is then multiplied by the waterline of your boat, divided by the wind chill factor, and subtracted from the number of days since Christmas. This is commonly known as your handicap. Anyone whose handicap is warmer than minus twenty-four, Fahrenheit, is expected to buy the hot toddies after the race. The entire purpose of frostbite racing appears to be stimulation.



AN ADIRONDACK PASSAGE
Christine Jerome
The Cruise of the Canoe *Sairy Gamp*
"A fine piece of work and a great delight." — John McPhee

**"A fine piece of work and a great delight."**
**—John McPhee**

**"An enchanting record of a canoe trip."**
***—The New Yorker***

Christine Jerome follows the route taken in 1883 by journalist and outdoorsman "Nessmuk" (George Washington Sears) in his 9-foot, 10½-lb canoe, the *Sairy Gamp,* 266 miles through the central Adirondacks. A rich, eloquent narrative that weaves Nessmuk's story with Jerome's and intersperses Adirondack cultural and natural history.

—**An Adirondack Passage** is 320 pages, paperback, $14.00
—**MoonWind at Large,** by Matthew Goldman, $14.95
—**The Journals of Constant Waterman,** $14.00
—**Boatbuilding for Beginners,** by Jim Michalak, $24.95
—**Small Boats on Green Waters,** by Brian Anderson, $15.00
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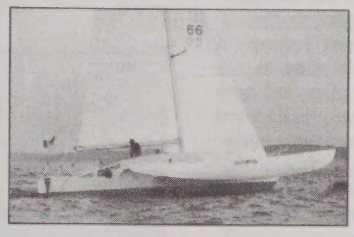

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# You write to us about...

## Activities & Events...

**Gundalow Cruises Coming Up**

Spring is coming and we are getting ready for up to 40 school groups onboard the *Piscataqua* in May and June. The *Piscataqua* and the *Adams* are making an epic journey up the Salmon Falls River in May for a week of school sails from the Hamilton House and the "Hike through History" at the Counting House Museum. We will do one public sail on the Salmon Falls River on May 19, tickets will be available on our website by mid-April.

Molly Bolster, Executive Director, The Gundalow Co, Portsmouth, NH, www.gundalow.org

**Elk Neck Messabout**

Our 3rd Annual Messabout at Elk Neck State Park in Maryland, May 31, June 1-2, will offer three days of "messing about," an informal time for sailboats, powerboats, canoes and kayaks, homebuilt or commercial, nail and glue, stitch and glue or "traditional." Delightful days, hours of sailing on beautiful water, swapping of stories at the comfortable beach and shady glen and new and continuing friendships through charmed days. Camping available, register early: http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/elkneck.asp. This is a voluntary gathering, attendees are solely responsible for one's family, guests, boat, etc.

Sailing will begin as early Friday as anyone gets there and a "welcome table" should be up by noon. Potluck supper Friday with free hotdogs with fixin's (courtesy Eric Hughes). Please bring side dishes and BYO beverage. A short get acquainted Capt's meeting will follow.

Saturday dawns with messing about and about 11am Steve Bosquette will lead the way across to Cabin John Creek for a raft up lunch (BYO). Later in the afternoon Tom Maurer will organize a "Marshmallow Scoop," which was a ball last year. Another potluck Saturday evening with free sausages, courtesy Capt Rick Urban. Bring a side dish and BYO beverage. We're "thinkin' on" an informal talk in the evening but haven't firmed anything up. There is time for more sailing and messing about that time of year.

Sunday, more messing about. Last year at least half the folks stayed and sailed through lunchtime and later. As always, we're invite comments and suggestions and offers of help.

To view our 2012 Messabout go to: http://www.duckworksmagazine.com/13/outings/eastern/index.htm#.UP2052dyGSo

**The 33rd Annual Urbanna Small Boat Meet**

The 33rd Annual Urbanna Small Boat Meet takes place on May 18-19 back on the Piankatank River at Freeport in Gloucester County, Virginia. Informal messabout with rowing and sailing races depending on the wind and whim. Limited primitive camping available. Arrival Friday PM OK. Saturday night potluck supper and barbeque. Sunday is on the water until mid afternoon. If you come early, take a side trip to the Deltaville MaritimeMuseum http://deltavilleva.com/museumpark/

Directions: From the intersection of Route 33, Route 17 and Route 198 at Glenns, take Route 198 E (Glenns Road) 6.2 miles to Freeport, Gloucester. Turn left on Freeport Road, go approximately a mile.

For more information call John or Vera England (804) 758-2721, mama5england@hotmail.com. This is a UCRRA sanctioned event.

**John Gardner Small Craft Workshop**

The John Gardner Small Craft Workshop will be at the WoodenBoat Show in Mystic Seaport on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 28-30, from 9am to 5pm daily. This year, in addition to having a booth to acquaint show attendees with the TSCA, there will also be demonstrations of skills that enhance the traditional small boat experience. The boats of the Mystic Seaport Boat House will also be available at no charge for show participants to use.

We are hoping for a continuous backdrop to the show of traditional small craft in action on the river. All TSCA members are encouraged to bring a boat and join in the fun. Launching and parking details will be sent out at a later time.

At 8am on Saturday and Sunday mornings there will be cruises incompany open to all workshop attendees. We will gather at the *Australia* Beach at 8am and cruise up river or down river to Mason Island.

Workshop participants can again sleep onboard the *Joseph Conrad* on Friday and Saturday nights.

Attendees will be asked to help with the workshop by either manning the booth at *Australia* Beach for two-hour periods and/or giving demonstrations of some skills such as sail rigging, sculling, boat building, hardware making, etc. If you have a skill that you would like to demonstrate at the show, please volunteer. Demonstrations should last about an hour and will be held at 11am, 1pm and 3pm each day. To sign up to man the booth or demonstrate a skill, use the registration form available from Mystic Seaport or contact David Wyman at david@dwymanpe.com or call (207) 3269406.

## Adventures & Experiences...

**I Can Relive My Youth**

I followed with great interest the saga of the *Carnival Triumph* adrift. I was filled with nostalgia for my own cruises with my husband, sailing across the Atlantic. We had no engine or air conditioning. We ate an alarming amount of Spam. Our toilet didn't flush either, it was a plastic bucket. But we did have showers, whenever it rained. Now that I'm too old for crossing oceans in small boats, it's nice to know that I can relive my youth, courtesy of Carnival Cruises.

Carol Jones, Tuckahoe, NJ

## Information of Interest...

**CBMM Expands Living Shoreline**

The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) in St Michaels, Maryland, has begun work on a new living shoreline which extends from the Watermen's Wharf exhibit to the museum's property line near the Inn at Perry Cabin. Expected to be completed in April, the project is an extension of the first two sections of living shoreline installed at CBMM in 2008 and 2009. The new shoreline is funded through generous support and grants from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Crystal Trust, Bonnell Cove Foundation and Constellation Energy.

Living shorelines use natural elements like native grasses and sand to provide erosion control protection while providing habitat for fish, crabs and other wildlife. Environmental Concern of St Michaels, Maryland, is constructing the shoreline, which includes installation of a stone sill to control wave erosion, native grasses, sand and two docks traversing the shoreline for water access. This spring, local students will become a part of the process by helping plant native grasses along the new shoreline.

"Our shoreline restoration project is a win-win proposition," said CBMM Vice President of Development David Crosson. "It gives us a chance to advance our educational mission and clearly demonstrates human actions can improve the Bay's health. There aren't a lot of places where the public can see how shoreline erosion can be reduced and how critical habitat for marine life can be recreated. We're one of these places and we're proud of it."

For more information, call (410) 745-2916, visit www.cbmm.org, or email have fun@cbmm.org.

**A Joy to Read**

Mr Ware's column "Beyond the Horizon" is always full of interesting information and is a joy to read. His lead paragraph in the "Gray Fleets" section of the March issue on weapons available to the Navy (and the decline in anti submarine capabilities) mentioned "those electromagnetic rail guns." Some of your readers may be aware of what the result can be of a couple of pounds of metal moving around 1,000mph impacting on other metal. The kinetic impact resulting energy release could be quite awesome. To me what is of concern is that the propulsion section (the "rail gun") could fit on a small boat, a truck or the like. The possible result may change the entire military acquisition process is bigger may not be better (larger target).

C. Henry Depew, Tallahassee FL

**About Gutenberg**

I really enjoyed Doc Regan's "Age of Discovery, Part 1" in the April issue, in fact, anything relating to history is un-put-downable! However, he perpetuated a common mistake when he said that Gutenberg "invented" the printing press. Actually, this device had been around for centuries; his big invention was movable type, which made the production of books affordable and opened the door to the mass dissemination of knowledge. To be strictly accurate Gutenberg stole the idea from the Orient, but that's another story.

Malcolm Fifer, Warrior, AL

**Trailer Tongue Wheels**

Check out how this guy put wheels on his trailer tongue. If they pivot and lift clear of the road with the regular jack, this is quite brilliant. I wonder if he once had a broken arm. I'm fersher gonna try it! I've got one of those hand towing wheel things, but it's never along for the ride out someplace away from the shop, and I'm thinking a couple of balloon tires would manage gravel a whole lot better than the regular tongue jack wheels.

I thought it was such a good idea, I ordered enough wheels to equip all five of my active duty full sized trailers. Except I went one better and got pneumatic wheels with bearing races and swivels. Sheesh. Did I just openly admit that I have accumulated FIVE trailers? Time to revisit one of those riffs about "having a slight problem with too many boatmouths to feed." Nobody says a word to SWMBO, about this, OK?

Also one of these mini twelves would be a complete kick. "But Kate, it just followed me home…it won't eat much…can't I keep it?..."

Dan Rogers, Newport, WA

## Projects...

**Electric Conversions**

We converted a 17' ChrisCraft utility from the '50s that is used on a no internal combustion motors lake to electric power, using a setup that is almost exactly the same as the Edoak boat seen in your April issue. Because the hull is much heavier and has more wetted surface, our results were a little less speed and a little more battery drain than his, but basically similar.

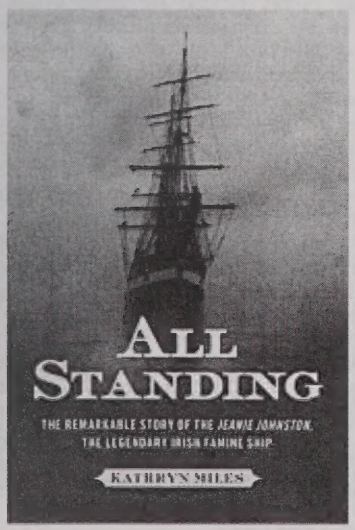
On our lake in Western Connecticut there is a much more radical boat, inspired by the desire to ski at dawn and still get along with the neighbors. It is an 18' inboard ski boat converted with a 70hp forklift motor and forklift batteries, done at a substantial cost by a local forklift guy.

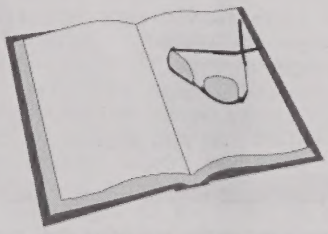
The February trade issue of *Soundings* had ads for Elco and Torqueedo electric motors, which top out at 100hp and 80hp respectively. These have costs in a whole different league than the MinnKota trolling motor conversions.

Boyd Mefferd, Boyd's Boats, Canton CT

# *All Standing*
## *The Remarkable Story of the Jeanie Johnston, The Legendary Irish Famine Ship*

By Kathryn Miles
ISBN 978-1-4516-1013-0
Free Press, January 2013
Reviewed in *The Apprentice*
Newsletter of the Rockland Apprenticeshop



# *Book Reviews*

This book, written by Rockland Apprenticeshop board member Kathryn Miles, recounts the dramatic tale of a legendary ship, *Jeanie Johnston*, which ran between Ireland and North America during the height of the Irish Famine. During this time, the people of Ireland emigrated to North America in search of job opportunities and a better life, crowding onto aptly named "coffin ships," whose gruesome conditions rivaled those of slave transports. But unlike every other coffin ship, the *Jeanie Johnston* never lost a passenger.

*All Standing* follows the life of Nicholas Reilly, a baby boy born on the ship's maiden voyage, his fellow passengers, and the heroic crew members who transported them to safety. Using newspaper accounts, rare archival documents, and her own experience sailing as an apprentice aboard the recently recreated *Jeanie Johnston*, Miles tells the story of these remarkable people and the revolutionary milieu in which they set sail.

The tale of each individual is extraordinary in and of itself; read collectively, however, their stories paint a unique portrait of bravery in the face of a new world order. Against the backdrop of one of history's greatest atrocities, Miles weaves a thrilling, intimate narrative of the immigrant experience, while chronicling how one Irish family found a place for itself in the United States.

(Kathryn Miles is a professor of environmental writing at Unity College. She is the author of *Adventures With Ari* and dozens of articles that have appeared in publications including *Alimentum, Best American Essays, Ecotone, Flyway, Meatpaper,* and *Terrain*. She lives and sails in Belfast, Maine.

**Editor Comments:** I received a review copy from the publishers and, as I have family ancestry that goes back to an 18-year-old Irish girl who emigrated alone to Boston on one of those "coffin ships" in 1848 to escape the Irish potato famine, I had more than a professional interest in reading it. I am happy to bring you this review from the author's cohorts at the Apprenticeshop. It could be viewed as self serving publicity but it is not, it is an accurate summary.

While the boat is the focus of the title, the narrative is mainly about the human experiences of the time but, unlike other far more comprehensive histories of the famine, it does include much about the conceiv-

ing, building and subsequent operation of the boat. The author seems to have discovered quite a lot of altruism behind this particular effort to cash in on the refugee trade, which was characterized as being harsh and inhuman profiteering (thousands died en route over four years) to accompany that of the British landlords who forced the refugee crises when the potato blight struck but failing to provide sustenance for their starving tenants, even evicting them from their hovels on their tiny rented potato patches.

The builder in Canada and the ultimate owner in the UK come across as good guys trying to do right while still making their efforts pay. The fact that nobody died on six crossings is historical testimony to this.

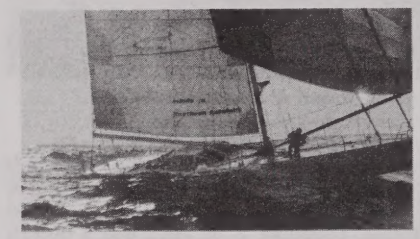
It's an interesting read about the subject, I found myself less interested in the subsequent lives of descendants who settled in the US midwest, where the narrative gets pretty far removed from the boat's story.

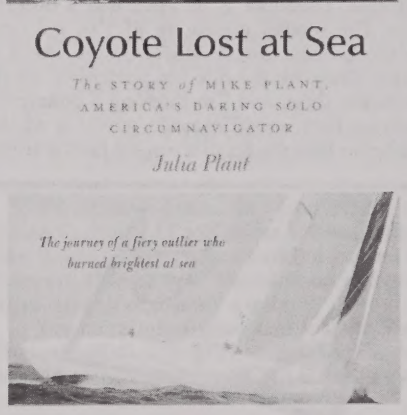
---

# *Coyote Lost At Sea*

## *The Story of Mike Plant America's Daring Solo Circumnavigator*

By Julia Plant
International Marine April, 2013
Hardcover, $25
ISBN 978-0-07-178990-5
MHID 0-07-178990-1




Coyote Lost at Sea
The STORY of MIKE PLANT, AMERICA'S DARING SOLO CIRCUMNAVIGATOR
Julia Plant
The journey of a fiery outlier who burned brightest at sea

Here's what the publisher has to say about this book:

This book is an often harrowing story that takes a firsthand frank look at an individual whose life was the very definition of fearlessness. Mike Plant was truly legendary, a risk taker of the highest order, his MO was pushing the envelope and tempting fate. He took risks with his health, with the law and especially with sailing. Always, Plant seemed to wriggle out of tight squeezes, the more challenging the risk, the more he went after it.

Plant came to ocean racing late as an American in a sport dominated by European sailors. He proved his merit by winning his class (50') in the 1986-87 BOC 2 solo around the world 24,000-mile race. His intensity and charismatic personality attracted hundreds of friends and his life was lived with great passion and fearlessness, which exhibited itself early on.

In 1992, when Plant entered the legendary around the world sailing race, The Vendee Globe, he had already completed three solo around the world races, beating competitors with more experience. To achieve this almost instant world renown in this exotic form of yacht racing Plant had sailed through hurricanes, surfed his boats down six-story waves, and survived a capsizing in 45' seas in the Indian Ocean.

During the fall of 1992, every possible risk would come to a head on the open seas as Plant sailed *Coyote* across the Atlantic to the start of his fourth solo around the world race. He never arrived. His brand new boat, *Coyote*, a relatively untested vessel fraught with technical problems during trial runs in Newport, Rhode Island, was found capsized, with an intact hull and rigging, but the ballast bulb gone.

Author Julia Plant is Mike Plant's younger sister, who exposes some of the underside of her brother's hero worship. "Everyone who knew Mike knew how he was. He burned his way through life. It seemed he had a few more lives than the rest of us." Julia delivered these words at her brother's service, she had struggled with her desire to be close to him but her need for self preservation had pulled them apart as they got older.

Her diligence to understand what happened to her brother, both from psychological and nautical perspectives (as evidenced by the Epilogue which details the Coast Guard investigation into his disappearance) reconstructs what may have happened to him during his final weeks at sea. The book is "a testimony to Mike's almost superhuman ability to drive one of the fastest sailing boats ever built, in extreme conditions, and survive for as long as he did."

In 1993 the Plant family launched The Mike Plant Memorial Fund which honors Mike's passion for sailing. It offers sailing opportunities for kids who are likely to spend their childhood without ever coming near a sailboat. For more information, visit http://www.wayzatasailing.org/mike-plant-memorial-fund.

Well, these are marketing words of course, but they are not hype. Hard to hype a story about this guy who from his youth was a hyperactive super achiever whose actions drove his family and friends to distraction. I stayed with the book (240 6"x9"pages) over two evenings to finish it. The author is the hero's kid sister and the reader really gets to know him through her eyes, visions often of despair and aggravation as he surged ahead in his life finally to focus on the rarefied game of solo around the world racing.

Understanding from all this what sort of a guy Mike Plant was, the boating reader will find how he went about tackling the large exotic yachts fielded by large syndicates crewed by experienced global racers fascinating. His first boat, in which he won his class and achieved instant recognition, was in many ways his best effort for he did it all alone, design concept (based in the midwest racing scows he knew so well), building it and racing it with minimal technology. Each succeeding boat became more complex in an effort to keep up with his competitors.

*Coyote*, his last, went over the top in technology. No longer relying on his own skills and judgment, Plant set out relying on technology that was far from ready to go and he didn't make it. One item in the report on the Coast Guard investigation which stuck out glaringly to me was how the keel bulb which went missing had been attached to the foil. It had been solidly bolted up to a substantial metal plate, which in turn was GLUED to the foot of the foil and wrapped with carbon fiber! For an old bolt things together guy like me, this was scary.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# *Whitewater!*

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

Whitewater racing for C-1 canoes and K-1 kayaks right in greater downtown Lowell, Massachusetts? Past crumbling old textile mills and rusty old outfall pipes from same? On a cold rainy Saturday in late March? Right. Bunch of local crazies? Not quite. Would you believe the U.S. National Team? And some local crazies too, of course.

It sort of started with a phone call Bart Hauthaway got. Bart runs winter pool sessions in Weston, MA, teaching kayak paddling and rolling. It's a local adult education course, no charge except for the $2 for the "lifeguard" who has nothing to do. A young man called to ask Bart if he might join his sessions. Never one to beat around the bush, Bart responded, "You any good?" This question didn't mean that Bart takes only "good" paddlers, he mostly caters to those in need of coaching. But he cannot suffer "experts" who turn up and then wish to tell him how it's done.

"Well," the young man replied, "I paddle some with the U.S. National team and was 3rd in the World Championships last year." And he wanted to join Bart's pool sessions? Bart was enthralled. Twenty years ago Bart coached U.S. Olympic paddlers, before that he was a top national competitor himself. Now in his early 60's, he still hasn't tired of paddling. And here was a modern day world class paddler wanting to join his modest little local training group.

"Bob, these young kids today have got moves we never even dreamed of twenty years ago," Bart told me later, after Bruce Lessels had put in his first appearance. After a slow start, not wishing to intimidate the local learners, Bruce had gone and run his C-1 canoe through Bart's English gates in a manner that totally blew Bart away. An English gate is a pair of sticks hanging over the water, through which one paddles in a series of moves designed to develop all the paddle strokes one needs, with rolls thrown in along the way.

The C-1 canoe and a solo slalom kayak look almost alike to the uninitiated, both are shallow decked craft of very slippery appearance. The canoe, however, requires one to kneel and to paddle with a single blade. Inside is a sort of seat block, two knee pocket blocks and a strap that crosses over the thighs to hold one in place. Over this goes a spray skirt a bit higher than one used in a kayak. This kneeling position gives more power to the paddle strokes it seems, than the seated position in a kayak permits. The single blade paddle is held in one grip and switched from side to side without switching hands.

Well, Bart learned that Bruce trained every day this past winter on a "whitewater" section of the Charles River that doesn't freeze over. Only when the air temperature dropped below 8 degrees did Bruce not practice. His desire to join the weekly evening class was simply to provide further training opportunity for practicing paddle strokes. One evening Bruce announced to Bart that he'd found a stretch of choice whitewater on the Concord River right in downtown Lowell, a short distance from its junction with the Merrimack. He was arranging for a race there March 26th and U.S. National Team practice on the following day.

The site is a stretch of the river that is channelled into a narrow gorge dropping about twenty feet in a half mile or so in nearly continuous rapids, past granite abutments and derelict old textile mills. Access was from an abandoned railway bed along one side, between the river and a large cemetery and some existing industrial plant backyards. On the far side some gentrification was just getting started on some of the empty mill buildings. "We thought we'd get kicked out," Bart later explained, "but on one visit the city park head and former U.S. Senator Paul Tsongas turned up and much preliminary discussion took place about adapting the site as a "whitewater park" for paddlers." (Lowell has ban state and national parks built around its early industrial revolution past).

So it was okay to have the race there, and about two dozen gates were strung up over the river on what was viewed by some we overheard as a rather long slalom course. A few words about this whitewater slalom game. While it is analagous to the sport of slalom skiing, with the water providing the momentum rather than gravity alone, a major difference is that the paddlers have to go through some gates UPSTREAM, they, in effect come down past the gate, hang a U-turn, paddle upstream through it, then another U-turn back on down. Also, they cannot touch the gates, which in this case hang from lines stretched across the river (skiers knock the springy gates they use flat). The bottom ends of

the gates are a few inches above the average level of the water, and one can swing either end of the canoe or kayak under them in passing through the gate as long as the gate pole is not touched.

The start was across the current and past a large outcropping of ledge around which the torrent roared, then down through a "tunnel" of concrete where at one time an adjacent mill had picked up river water. Then down a steady series of gradual rapids with many gates until down around gates 16 or 17 one got to the steepest drops and greatest turbulence. It was here that the race was to be won or lost and so it's where most of the onlookers gathered. The rocky bankings permitted us to stand close enough to almost reach out and touch paddlers. Great spectating.

What'd we see? Action, lots of action. I'm completely uneducated in the nuances of such a sport. While the current tends to hurl one downstream, the rapids, over submerged rocks and ledges, set up eddies and standing waves, so, curiously enough, one can see a paddler sitting still in the midst of churning whitewater, paddle at rest. Not while racing of course. But these dead spots are there. The upstream gates are spotted to utilize these, but one has to pick just the right slot to arrive in to take advantage of this.

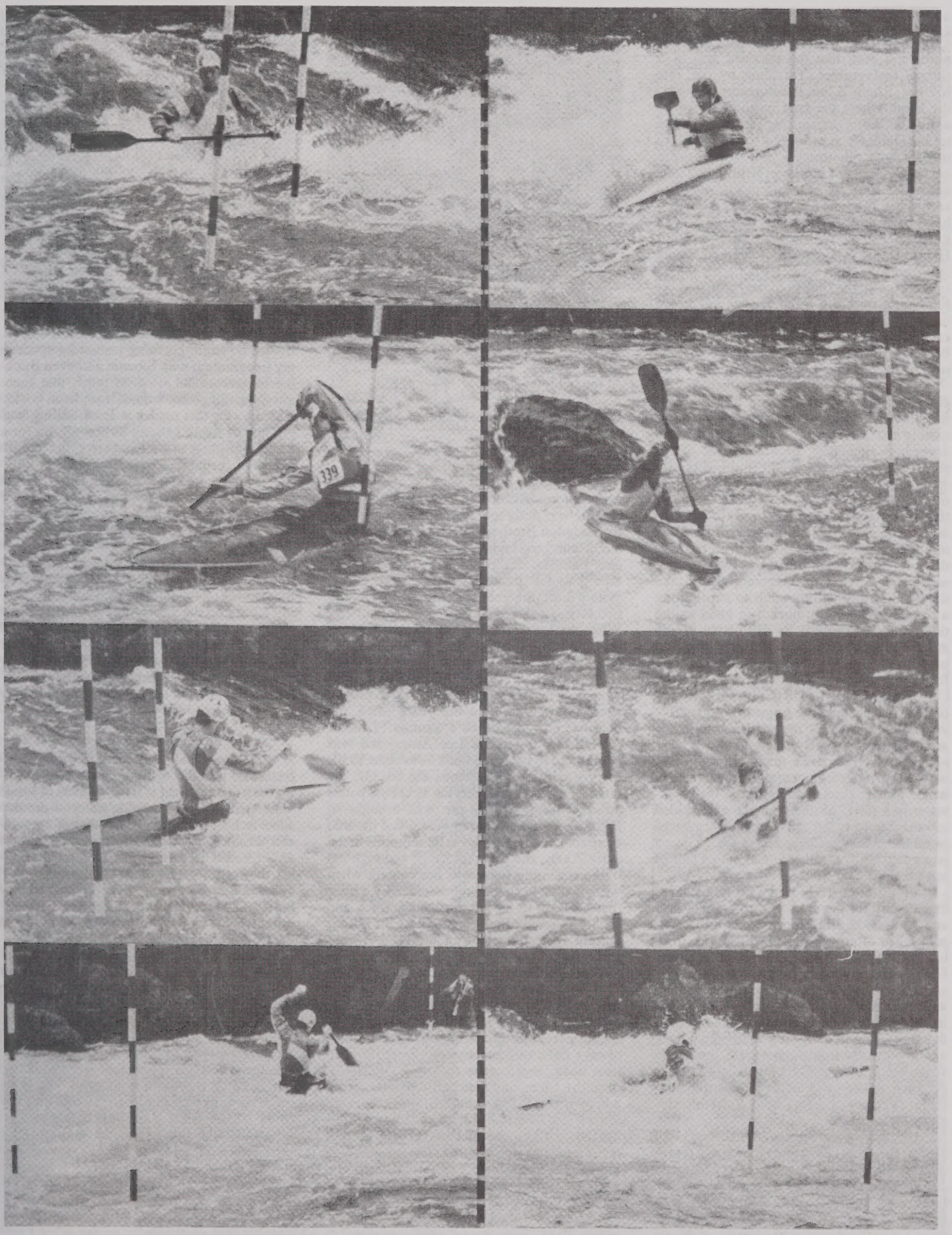
Bruce was the only one we were acquainted with, so we naturally watched him closely. He's very tall, about 6'6" and slim and so he sits "tall in the saddle" and has an enormous reach wth that paddle. The technique almost appears to be a stabbing of the paddle into the torrent to pivot the canoe about and direct it to where it is desired to go. So, one way to do the upstream gate in the roughest part was to drop over the 2' fall just above it and let the water swing the boat around backwards, even backing the rear deck under the near gate pole. Then once the bow could be swung past that pole into the gate, several strong strokes upstream propelled one through and one could then bear off to the right, let the current catch one to ferry across to the next downriver gate. But not too soon or one would get carried right past before getting far enough over. And not too close to the falls, as the standing wave there would shove the boat right under and hold it.

Words cannot adequately describe the orchestration of moves that ran this one gate the fastest. Those less skilled often arrived submerged, even on their sides, but a quick probe towards the bottom would right them. Others took a longer route around a sort of curling eddy that swung them around nicely into place for the upstream move. But this was slower. The women tended to use the flow of the water more, no doubt in awareness of muscular limitations, but the guys would come straight over the falls, go nearly under while pivoting 180 degrees. Quicker but messier and more likely to miss the proper alignment.

A number missed the next gate after getting caught in the rushing turbulence too far out in midstream, a few swung into a shoreside eddy and took another shot, others just gave up on it and hurtled down towards the last two, somewhat easier gates. But, as in any skilled activity, the really good paddlers made it look so simple, minimum number of paddle strokes, no false moves and obvious corrections, little thrashing about in the foam. They were obviously exerting themselves, but in so finely controlled a manner as to be very deceiving about just how demanding this was.

Bart was watching, he can't do this stuff anymore, his spinal arthritis handicaps him on the speed of the moves required. He stood there enthralled by the good paddlers, and almost without thinking consciously about it, noting what the less skilled were doing wrong. For my part, I can't even keep upright in one of those kayaks in a pool without paying very close attention. While Bart would just love to be out there again, I was happy enough to not be expected to do so. It's too late in my life to try this game. But it was a thrill to watch these mostly young people going for it here at "Thoreau's Portage" on the Concord River in the wilds of greater downtown Lowell.

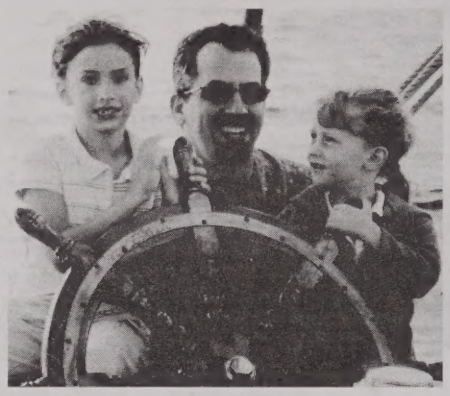
Looking upstream from Gate 18, the apparent "forest" is the second growth in the river's gully, just over the top are the old mills of the one-time textile center of the nation.




On the left, Bruce Lessel's "effortless" looking technique makes this gate but a brief encounter. On the right, two of the women making opposite approaches in good shape, and two other less fortunate paddlers arriving in disarray. Centerspread overleaf, "just another Saturday paddle!" Bruce Lessels in action.

# Wind, Water and Wood

By Kenneth Sherwood
sherwood@iup.edu



At the helm on *Hindu*.

### The Approach

Cape Cod extends into the Atlantic, north and east, like the upraised arm of a flexing bodybuilder. Traveling by car, one follows Route 6 up the forearm, towards the hand, where the land narrows to barely a mile wide and the shifting sand that makes up the Outer Cape exposes itself at the bases of the hardy pitch pines. Once a prominent center for cod and mackerel fishing that was accessible only by sea, Provincetown, Massachusetts, bred the Cape Cod boy who "can hand, reef and steer by the time he flies a kite," in the words of 19th century visitor Henry David Thoreau. Commercial Street still fronts the deep water harbor with its distinctive hook, the fingers of the hand, and the lighthouse on Long Point flashes its "green on 4s" to guide the smattering of small boats eschewing electronics. But the ice house has been converted to condos and the wharves now provide prime downtown parking.

Like so many coastal towns in the northeast, Provincetown has become a community in which the tourist economy overshadows fishing and the sea plays a scenic but in some ways incidental part. Before I "took to the ship," most summers would find our family spending a week or two among the 30,000 others each season who visit and experience the water on this part of Cape Cod as the scenery of a vacation destination. In June, we might sit with the other parents who guarded the kids as they danced in the still icy surf at Herring Cove. Our daughters would take the hand of any willing adult to stroll along a bayside beach with bucket in hand as the tide receded to reveal its distinctive aroma and the promise of such treasures as polished blue sea glass or Quahog shells that they took for Wampanoag tender.

What I have come to think of as my "second sail" began on a late August afternoon five years ago. Friends of my mother-in-law had arranged for a birthday celebration, we were along for the ride. Like many other tourists, we had spent afternoons aboard a crowded whale watch vessel, splashing past the breakwater in a cloud of diesel smoke and headed towards Stellwagen Bank. Seeing humpbacks or minke whales up close is impressive, but it was a few hours aboard the *Hindu* that helped me see Cape Cod's waters differently.

A dozen friends and family gathered expectantly on the dock with picnic baskets and coolers, stuffing loose items into backpacks. The afternoon began with engine trouble. Or perhaps it was a simple prop repair. For reasons now obscure, that day the *Hindu* sat moored 200 yards off the pier, 79' long with twin masts, gaff sails furled and a shining black hull, a beautiful, quiet boat. Rather than motoring in and tying at the busy dock as she normally would have done, the *Hindu* sent a small tender. The crew began to ferry passengers out, we climbed the boarding ladder, stowed our gear and then helped the crew raise the sails.

Setting a hull in motion through the raising of canvas, it must be the most ordinary procedure in sailing. On that day it seemed, stupidly enough, also the most miraculous, a revelation for this non sailor to be cutting through the gentle chop and into the main bay under the quiet power of wind alone. No diesel fumes, no teeth-chattering rumble below the feet. For hours we sat on deck talking quietly and I absorbed the feel of the water from this classic but suddenly novel platform. A friend sang, we enjoyed dinner and wine. I was becoming seduced for the first time by the harmonization of wind, water and wood.

### The *Hindu*

The *Hindu* herself has a story almost a century long. According to her current owners, she was designed by William Hand, built by Hodgdon Brothers in East Boothbay Harbor, Maine, and launched in 1925 as the Princess Pat. The design is said to be modeled after that of a Grand Banks fishing schooner. With a draft of 8', she is distinguished by her two stayed masts and a bowsprit of about 10'. When we sailed on her, she sported a mainsail, foresail, jib and flying jib.

An early owner was James Goodwin Hall, a Wall Street Broker and WWI pilot who flew to Havana in 1931 as a protest against Prohibition. In the years since, the boat has changed hands a number of times. As Saispas and Anna Lee Ames, she was committed to the spice trade in the late 1930s for William Parker, whence she became the *Hindu*. Surviving her service as U boat patrol vessel during WWII, she was brought to Provincetown as a charter vessel and moored there for decades. About to be scrapped in the early 2000s, she was purchased and restored by Kevin Foley (who was her captain when we sailed on her), then repossessed by a bank that went on to let her sink at the dock and finally purchased and restored again by her current owners, the Rowan family.

### From Sunfish Youth to Armchair Sailor

The sail as a passenger on the *Hindu* was not, strictly speaking, my first ever. There had been scattered Sunfish at summer camps decades previous but never enough wind and always three or four boys to a boat. We pre teen boys would wade up to our waists to raise the lateen and detach the painters from a buoy tied to a few concrete blocks, then try our luck until a horn blew 40 minutes later. I don't recall any formal instruction, though there must have been some. The most enduring memory of those experiences was the challenge of paddling the sodden, fiberglass surfboards back to shore while not being clonked on the head with the boom as the sail slatted about. Yet somehow the roots for this adult experience, so powerful, so compelling, must have been planted then in youth.

We took our turns at the helm, the sun went down, and the sail with the *Hindu* ended that August evening in Provincetown. I did not yet know the expression, but as Labor Day passed and we returned to inland Pennsylvania, I had already become something of an armchair sailor. I don't mean to say that I was the older fellow who has passed his sailing days, or whose boat sits unattended in the marina while he dreams of big trips, rather, I was sufficiently captivated by those few hours aboard the *Hindu* that I had hatched a plan to explore this new, energizing contact with wind and water

Over the winter I consumed every sailing book in our local libraries and then turned to Amazon, another title every two weeks to see me through the cold. Rousmaniere's *Annapolis Book of Seamanship* found its way onto my shelves. Seidman's *The Complete Sailor* remains a favorite, more approachable text with its precise and informative illustrations. But I was just as happy to take a longer journey with Moitessier or the Pardeys. Brown's *Frugal Yachting* jostled for space in my imagination with Slocum and even Buckley. Conventional wisdom holds that there are some things one cannot learn from books. Happily, for this reader at least, sailing was not one of them, so long as one allows for a healthy quantity of trial and error mixed with a dash of casual improvisation.

There seemed to be no sailing schools in my neck of the woods and I didn't then know of any other sailors, just a modest state park which boasted two catamarans and one 14' American sloop. Under such circumstances how does one move from theory into practice? It so happened that, since the rental staff themselves could neither teach nor judge sailing ability on the water, they had arrived at a practical assessment. If the customer could rig the boat and launch it without crying for help, then he was capable enough to safely sail it. Thank you, John Rousmaniere. I hanked on the jib with enough seeming authority to pass the first test.

### Trial and Error

Yellow Creek Lake is a 720-acre manmade lake with 2½ miles of open water stretching west to east, a half to three-quarters of a mile wide, perfect for an aspiring sailor to develop some tacking skills. Over the course of the summer the college students who rented out kayaks and canoes at the park seemed to notice the project, they came to refer to me as "the sailor guy," either in deference to my large-brimmed Tilley hat or just because I was out there weekly, sometimes twice a week if the schedule allowed and the wind seemed promising.

When in college, I hadn't been particularly interested in beginning with Subject 101. How much more interesting to dive into the middle or upper levels, where the ideas were stimulating and one would have to work a bit to meet the challenge? Anyway, there was no one to teach me and I'd reached the age where taking classes wasn't all that attractive. But what a wonderful, engaging process, unlike previous excursions into territory where I had no business being, to head out to the lake solo to practice short tacking or a controlled gybe, or trimming main and jib and then feeling in the tiller the immediate feedback that everything was in balance. Most nights after sailing I would spend a half hour rereading a passage in Jobson or my favorite text of the week to see what I had done well or to puzzle out something new that I would practice at the next opportunity. How well I remember the first afternoon in higher winds when the stable sloop broached for the first time, I lost steerage as I came through

the tack and had to throw myself across the boat to free the jib sheets and avoid a capsize. So that's what the author was warning about on page 219!

**Solo at Cape Cod**

That following summer, we returned to Provincetown but my desire wasn't for another cruise on the *Hindu* that year. As an expression of either concern or support, my mother-in-law saw to it that I discovered another Provincetown landmark, Flyers Boat Yard and Marina. So began my first formal lesson, at the helm of one of Flyers' stolid Rhodes 19 sloops. After some brisk upwind sailing, a few beam reaches and a nice gybe around the Coast Guard buoy, I'd passed my second test (perhaps to the family's surprise!) and was cleared to rent a boat whenever I wanted.

Family on the beach at Long Point, Provincetown, Rhodes at anchor.

For the rest of the vacation, when the wind picked up, I'd abandon the beach and head down to Flyers, alone or with kids and wife as crew. Even adjusting the outhaul and tightening the boom vang, it's not easy to keep up with an 80' schooner when you're in a 19' centerboard sloop. I'm satisfied to say that we sailed around in the same general territory. Anyhow, I told myself, she probably had her engines back in repair by now. If we didn't overtake her, it didn't much matter as I'd learned that it was something else altogether that moves me.

(A writer and teacher, Kenneth Sherwood has built and sails several simple wooden boats, volunteers for the Moraine Sailing Club and serves as the faculty advisor for the sailing club at Indiana University of Pennsylvania).

# Smart Skippers Shouldn't Sleep Naked

By George Swanson

Labor Day Weekend 1980, somewhere near Fisher's Island Sound in southern New England.

The boat, the *Ellen E.*, was a 17' Dromedille, Cuddy Cabin, 40hp outboard powered camping and skiing gunkholer. It was the shortest hard top vee berth I'd ever seen. It was designed in Norway and made in Canada.

The crew: Skipper, the owner's husband; the skipper's wife ("don't break my boat") and the ship's dog, a mini poodle. Our son was away at Charlestown Beach, Rhode Island, camping with his grandparents.

On Sunday evening there were three reasons not to leave for home; 1) we were having a good time, 2) the kid was being watched, 3) the trailer lights weren't working again, as usual. We anchored west of Noank's Mouse Island, offshore far enough to still see the pebbled bottom and many dark boulders far enough beneath the surface.

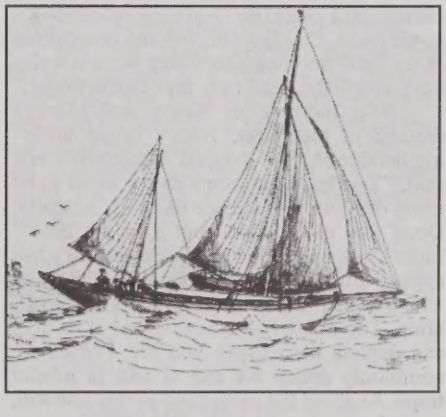
After the sun had set we stuck the boathook down into the clear water and watched the sparkles of the bioluminescence. It being hot and dark, the skipper made a command decision to sleep naked. Who would know or care as there had been no visible activity at the nearby beachfront cottages. The owner, having overall command and judgment, chose her usual nightgown as her uniform of the day (night). The wind speed indicator (our boat club burgee's brass grommets and eyehooks) was sounding a pleasant "squeak, squeak" as we drifted off to sleep.

At about an hour before first light I was awakened by a buzzing sound as the first gust of a thunderstorm excited the wind speed indicator. The boat had already dragged the anchor and we were parallel to the beach and rolling violently. Getting underway was the plan. The motor started on the first pull and we backed toward deeper water. Bang went the shear pin on the first boulder we hit. (I'll bet that the bioluminescent critters were as excited as I was.) We were again parallel to the beach and soon aground.

Getting back afloat was the priority. I grabbed my navy boondockers, as otherwise those pebbles were going to hurt. The choppy surf was cold and the cold rain was like needles on my balding head. While trying to push the boat back into the water, I was reminded of an antique hand powered fireman's pumper, the way that the gunnel was going up and down. "Give me a hat," I requested of the owner.

She said "What?" from inside the cuddy window.

I said louder, "Give me a hat," wondering just what she might be doing in there. Then the gear started to come out, first the hat, then a life jacket, then, as the dawn was becoming brighter, out came a bathing suit to cover my moony butt. Trying to put a bathing suit on while holding onto the gunnel going up and down and coming at me, was interesting. As the storm was then decreasing, I was able to reset the anchor. Hypothermia was, however, increasing as I climbed the boarding ladder. "Give me a warm dog and a sleeping bag," I requested. The owner complied. As the emergency passed and the chills became less frequent, the owner said softly to the skipper, "Did you break my boat?"



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# The Hokie Pogie Paddle 1990

By Chuck Wright

Ankle deep in dead fish and nauseated by the stench, I led our group of seven kayakers to Little Snow Island. We'd first sensed the smell as we paddled up Quahog Bay. We'd heard of the massive kill of pogies (also called menhaden), but that had been four weeks earlier. Surely it would be cleared up by now. Wrong! Millions of fish must have died for the shore was covered with a swath of well-rotted fish right up to the high tide line. We climbed up the bank into the woods where the smell was not so powerful to eat a late lunch. The others, all Appalachian Mountain Club members, were invited on this trip as they were close friends.

Bob, Doug and I had done the trip last year. The newcomers included Kellie, Marilyn, Lee and Nancy? Where was Nancy? Marilyn jokingly blew two blasts on her whistle (our signal to regroup). Nancy's anguished cry came from down on the beach. Soon she appeared, white-faced and shaken. Her flip-flop sandals had sprayed "disgusting green goo" up the back of her legs. Doug offered to sell her his boots for $50. She unhesitatingly said they were worth $100. As the only one without boots, she'd been reluctant to come ashore, but she finally realized none of us were chivalrous enough to carry her ashore.

I had experienced a fish kill before, but nothing like this. We debated turning around and paddling back to our last campsite. Nancy said she would paddle through hell to get away from those dead fish. Unfortunately it was a long way back and several of us were too tired. There was no choice but to stay where we were. We unloaded our boats and gingerly carried our gear through the foul soup of dead fish. Later that night we sat around a campfire swapping spontaneous pogie jokes. Our favorite was the description of the little hopping dance step we did walking through the dead fish, the "Hokie Pogie."

Next morning as Nancy and Marilyn dressed in their tent, Nancy began applying deodorant. She stopped thoughtfully and said, "You know, it seems pretty weird to be using deodorant in a place like this. Actually, Doug told me I should put it in my nose!" Later Doug and Kellie confessed that they had applied aftershave lotion under their noses.

The fish kill was attributed to asphyxiation. Too many fish concentrated in an area can deplete the oxygen and die. Pogies are commonly netted for use as bait in lobster traps. At about the same time as this fish kill, a whale was trapped by a net placed across the mouth of Harpswell Harbor. A net long enough to close off that harbor could close any of the other bays and coves in the area, like Quahog Bay. Did fishermen contribute to the kill?

We were glad we hadn't been in the area at the time of the kill, for then the smell had been so bad that people moved out of their homes. In some places the kill was so extensive that everything in the water died. We heard that even the lobsters crawled out of the water. Gun Point Cove, which had previously been filled with lobster traps, was all but empty now. This was the third day of my third year of leading sea kayaking trips in Maine's Casco Bay. Maybe double threes are bad luck? Truthfully though, this trip was an excellent one with six days of sunny clear weather and a delightful group of people. Even the pogies contributed by making the "Hokie Pogie Paddle" a truly memorable trip.

We had started from Spring Point in South Portland on August 30. On each of the next five nights we camped at a different location; Crow Island, Strawberry Creek Island, Little Snow Island, Clark Cove and Little Chebeague Island. The campsites we used were clean and appeared to be relatively unused with the exception of Little Snow Island. This is used as a picnic spot by the locals and has accumulated debris such as old lawn chairs, tire swings and even a makeshift latrine we dubbed the "Pogie Pottie."

In three years of visiting these islands in August, I have yet to encounter another party camping on any island but Little Chebeague, which has ample room for several groups. The campsites on Crow and Strawberry Creek Islands are limited, however, as described in the Maine Island Trail Association literature. Little Chebeague is described as a difficult place to camp, but we found camping on the broad expanse of beach above the high tide line on the east side of the island to be very pleasant.

The campsite at Clark Cove is on private land and is not part of the Maine Island Trail that was pioneered by Bill Gerber of the Appalachian Mountain Club back in the early 1980s as part of his five-day canoe route. This was the foundation for the Maine Island Trail Association route developed by Dave Getchell. We got permission from the owner before camping here.

We pitched our tents in a large field at the top of the bluff with an impressive view of Harpswell Sound. The owner and his son are friendly lobstermen who entertained us with stories, such as one about being attacked by a seal on board their lobster boat. They sold us several very fresh lobsters and loaned us a big pot for cooking them. Balancing a 4gal pot on a Whisperlite stove was a real challenge.

That night a storm hit the area, passing to the west of us with an impressive display of lightning. Passage of the front brought us a strong following wind for our return to South Portland. All but one morning was sunny and the air was mostly clear, unlike the foggy, hazy times I have had paddling in Casco Bay other years.

The bay in summer is a busy place. Boaters do have to keep an eye on the boat traffic, especially the small yellow inter-island ferries, but I enjoy seeing, and being a part of, the activity. We all carried whistles and had a code to alert each other; one blast for approaching boat traffic, two to regroup and three or more blasts for an emergency such as a capsize. Many of the islands and peninsulas are quite developed. The small older houses blend pleasingly into the scenery, but the large new houses often seem intrusive and out of place. Amidst the developed areas, however, there are also small undeveloped islands and untouched coves where osprey soared and called. Though never more than a mile from civilization, these places felt like wilderness.

The ocean side of Long Island has rolling swells and crashing surf, an interesting little harbor in Harbor Grace and beautiful sand beaches at Shark Cove. Although there is local concern about pollution of Casco Bay, the areas I have seen appear clean. There is litter, much of it pieces of lobster traps and buoys, but not enough to be seriously offensive. I especially like Harpswell Sound, Gun Point Cove and Quahoag Bay, which are not heavily developed. We enjoyed watching seals cavort in upper Harpswell Sound and Gun Point Cove. The seals also watched us. The first and last boats were most likely to see seals, the first could spot them before they submerged and the last watch as they surfaced again seemingly out of curiosity about us.

Kayaks are excellent for exploring coastal waters like Casco Bay. They are silent and maneuverable and can slip into secluded spots not accessible to larger craft. Whether gliding into quiet coves under the overhanging branches of hemlocks and pines, or skirting the surf washing against sheer rock cliffs, the kayaker is in intimate contact with the surroundings.

I research possible campsites in advance and plan a tentative route. Flexibility is essential, since our actual course is apt to change according to the weather or the inclinations of the trip members. A trip should be enjoyable for all so I try to keep paddling distances manageable for even the least experienced paddler. In practice this has meant average distances of about ten miles a day. This requires about four or five hours of paddling, interspersed with leisurely breaks for lunches, swimming and sightseeing.

Paddling in Maine can require navigating in thick fog. I prepare for this by marking courses on my trip charts between major navigational aids and landmarks with compass bearings. We were lucky in that this year was clear, but on two previous trips part of the route had to be navigated by compass. Tides in Casco Bay range about 4'. This year we started our trip about a week before full moon. This meant that the tide was high when we got underway in the mornings, making it easier to get our heavily laden boats down to the water. By the time we landed in the afternoons the tide was on its way back in. The moon was up early in the evening, bathing our campsites in such bright silvery light that flashlights were unnecessary.

Mosquitoes defied prediction, one year they were so thick we were driven into our tents at dusk. This year was a good year. Although bothered occasionally, we usually were able to sit out after dark talking and enjoying the camaraderie into the night.

Nobody asks bicycle riders if they're afraid of falling, but people frequently ask kayakers if they're not afraid of tipping over. Different models of kayaks vary considerably in stability, but staying upright is generally not as difficult as people think. Practice and being cautious about water conditions are necessary however. If capsized, many kayakers can roll back up but exiting the boat, righting it and re-entering are possible for the experienced. Another concern non kayakers often express is getting the spray skirt off, this is no problem, especially in the high adrenaline conditions of an accidental capsize.

Many sea kayaks have waterproof bulkheads separating bow and stern compartments from the open cockpit. Gear is stored in these compartments through deck hatches. In kayaks without such compartments, gear is stored in waterproof "dry bags." Kayaks can carry less gear then canoes but more than most backpackers. "Backpacking with luxuries" is an apt description of kayak camping. My fiberglass boat is quite light at 42lbs. Less expensive polyethylene kayaks weigh about 65lbs.

My camping gear for summer travel weighs about 30-35lbs, including a solo tent, plastic tarp, mattress, sleeping bag, rain gear and extra clothes, personal items, backpacker's stove, cook kit, flashlight, first aid kit, weather radio, flares, wind meter and playing cards. This all packs into three medium sized dry bags, plus one small bag for emergency equipment. I carry food in a fourth dry bag, my share weighed about 15lbs. Two gallons of fresh water add another 15lbs. We were able to replenish our water supply twice during our six day trip.

Boat equipment includes spare paddle, bilge pump, compass, charts in a waterproof case, life jacket, neoprene vest and boots, suntan lotion and chapstick, sunglasses and hat and a loud whistle. The total weight of gear plus food and water comes to about 65lbs.

On most Appalachian Mountain Club trips the leaders supply the food and the group does the cooking. Although fun, this requires large Coleman stoves and takes a lot of time. For this trip we paired up, with each pair determining their own menu and sharing a one burner stove. Since there were seven of us, Nancy chose to be "odd man out." She decided not to cook but instead brought about 45lbs of soy nuts, raisins, almonds and assorted surprises which she shared with us throughout the trip. The first night she reached up into the bow of her kayak and produced a whole angel food cake! Later meals were varied with orange gumdrop slices and barbeque flavored corn chips. An unusual menu for a kayak trip to say the least!

The cooking teams reciprocated by sharing all leftovers. At the end of each dinner, Nancy made the rounds with her empty bowl and got to sample the group's more ordinary fare; macaroni and cheese with tuna, macaroni and cheese with canned chicken, various freeze dried backpacker dinners, chili, jerky stew and more macaroni and cheese. At the end of the trip she still had enough soy nuts, raisins and almonds for another week, as well as one-third of a now stale angel food cake.

All good things must end and so we paddled with reluctance toward South Portland on the last day of our trip. Our arms were strong and our kayaks light. We felt as if we could paddle forever, and wished that we could. We delayed the inevitable by stopping to explore Fort Gorges at the entrance to Portland Harbor. This monolithic structure was built prior to the Civil War. It was made obsolete before the end of that war by the development of more powerful guns that could penetrate its heavy granite walls. Its sides rose straight out of the water, with approach possible only across a small sandy beach in front of the large entry doorway. The doorway was blocked by a deep moat which was spanned by a couple of long planks. We carefully walked the planks and found ourselves in a large courtyard overgrown with shrubbery and weeds. The courtyard was encircled by the granite walls, which had many windows as well as open areas where the guns once had been positioned. We explored the inner rooms and passageways and climbed to the thicket of shrubbery growing on the roof. Finally, we could delay no longer and returned to our waiting kayaks.

Being a trip leader requires time and effort. My reward is the satisfaction of leading a trip that is enjoyed by all. I consider myself fortunate to have shared the Casco Bay trips with people whose company I have thoroughly enjoyed. This year I had an additional reward given to me as we stood outside the entrance to Fort Gorges. They presented me with a boat cushion that had been found washed up on a beach a few days earlier. On the cushion Marilyn had written: "Presented to Chuck Wright, leader of the First Annual Hokie Pogie Paddle, Casco Bay, Maine, August 30 – September 4, 1990." It was signed by my friends and kayaking companions.

I still have and use the cushion mentioned though the signatures have long since faded away, I'm sitting on it as I write this. Unfortunately, this was my last trip in Casco Bay and about my next-to-last kayak trip before my life changed drastically. I look back on these trips with great fondness for both the trips and the people who accompanied me on them.

# The Annual River Trips

By John Smith
Reprinted from *The Mainsheet*
Newsletter of the Delaware River TSCA

When I was a young boy my parents had a 23' cruising sloop named *Electron*. That name came from my dad's profession, which dealt in a variety of electronic stuff. The boat drew 4' and was sailed summers off a mooring in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, accessed via the Raritan Yacht Club.

My folks did not have this boat hauled during the winter months, likely for monetary reasons, but brought it up the Passaic River to Bill's Boat Yard which was as far up the river as the marked channel went. A half a mile further up the river was more like a creek. The *Electron* spent the winter in the water, in spite of the river freezing over. Dad built her strong and she survived the ice.

The Passaic has many bridges. Most had to open for us to pass. We'd blow three times on a horn and wait for the bridge tender to respond. Response was seldom quick. As we waited we simply circled around until the bridge rose. It was somewhat interesting to see how different bridges were designed to open a passage for various boats that needed to pass. Some raised one end and had a huge counterbalance block on the other end. Some raised a whole section straight up. Others turned on a center with one end balancing the other. We seemed to be the lone sailboat, but in those days there was a bit of commercial traffic and some larger power boats enjoying the river and many of them needed more clearance than the bridges would provide without being raised.

Every fall Dad threatened to make a tabernacle for the mast. I have no idea why he never did. It would have made the trip much quicker. What he did do one year was find phone numbers directly to the bridge tenders. He called them all the day before and asked them to please look for us. That actually helped.

These were the years when Route 21 was built along that river and the river was noticeably narrower as a result. River traffic kept shrinking. The highway eliminated the Nutley Marina where many boats launched. Public launch ramps at several parks grew over with weeds. Bill's Boat Yard went out of business, as did other marinas along the Passaic. From a boating perspective, the Passaic was dying. I sometimes wonder if those bridges still have people tending them should some vessel come along and wish to pass.

We then found ourselves making this twice a year trip to a place on the Hackensack River. The Hackensack didn't freeze. It also didn't seem to have as many bridges that needed to open, making the trip less unpleasant. Driving distance from home to the place on the Hackensack was only about ten more minutes than Bill's place on the Passaic. In most respects it was better, but I soon missed the hot dogs from Rutt's Hut that we had driven by to the Passaic River winter mooring. When I'm in the area I try to fit in a stop there for lunch. I look over at the river and see no boats. Kind of sad, thinking of days gone by.

**About Our Delaware River Chapter TSCA**

John Smith is a member of the Delaware River Chapter of the TSCA. The Chapter meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Red Dragon Canoe Club, Edgewater Park, NJ. The meetings are open to all. Anyone wanting information should contact Frank Stauss at fstauss@verizon.net.

One wouldn't think that plain rudeness was a good strategy to use in pursuit of a job. But you never know what will succeed. Here are two examples of when rudeness worked for me.

At the end of my February article Bob Hicks told you how he and I share some history together, that I used to work for him back in the early '70s when he was editing and publishing two motorcycle magazines. When I first thought of approaching him, I was simply hoping to get more regular work as a photographer and feature writer covering the New England motorcycle racing scene for his *Cycle Sport* magazine. Bob had seen (and used) some of my photography and race reporting, so I was not a completely unknown quantity, even though we had never met.

With most of Bob's attention and effort directed at his newer *Trail Rider* publication, *Cycle Sport* had begun to show signs of neglect. To be blunt, it was getting a bit stale and repetitive. So one afternoon, feeling more full of myself than my meager "accomplishments" in my chosen métier entitled me to, I called Bob up and said, "Your magazine is starting to look pretty bad. Do you need some help?"

To my surprise, and delight he said, "Yeah…you're right. Come on down and we'll talk." The following week I became a magazine editor. There was no apprenticeship. For a young, brash and eager photo-journalist, not long returned from a tour of duty in Viet Nam, finding myself an editor, with my own "opinion" column, was a heady experience.

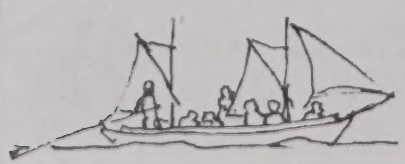
Once hired, he gave me complete editorial control over "my" magazine, *Cycle Sport*, while he concentrated his efforts and enthusiasm on a newer one, *Trail Rider*, which had gotten him involved in a lot of interesting peripheral activities.

Thus began a six-year adventure that permanently altered the course of my life. When people ask me who most influenced the kind of person I have become, I always give them the same reply, my dad and Bob Hicks.

From Dad, I got the template for being a husband and a father and the inextinguishable voice in my head that, with every new project, always asks, "If you don't have time to do it right, when are you going to have time to do it over?"

From Bob, I got the encouragement to try, and his example of someone trying, things that I had never imagined myself trying, and learning that I had, or could acquire, the resources to do them and, more often than not, succeed.

After four years of editing, reporting on races and doing a bit of racing myself, I became a promoter of races at one of the biggest and best venues in New England, with a bit of guidance and a couple of critical introductions from Bob (who had promoted regional and international events at the same venue). I created a kind of racer's co-op that continued to promote races, improve conditions for the 800+ amateur racers who were the backbone of the sport in New England and endured for several years after I left to move to Nova Scotia.



St Mary's Bay Chronicles No 5

# Nice Publishers Rude Contributors

By Ernie Cassidy
upcloseconcerts@eastlink.ca

Dad taught me the basics of carpentry and woodworking. After years of pestering, he finally said, "OK, we're going to start with the most important tool in the shop." I looked towards the table saw; he handed me a broom. Seeing the expression on my face, he added, "Messy shop, messy work; no messy work in my shop." (I still keep three brooms in my own workshop. Sadly, for all of you, he did not manage to pass on that terseness of speech.)

Bob's example helped me realize that I could design and build a whole house, which I did after moving to Nova Scotia. From plans to plumbing, (rustic) cabinetry to roofing, a lot of the wiring and all of the finish work. But I digress…

One of the surprising things about all of Bob's publications is that they had influence out of all proportion to the number of subscribers, this despite their determinedly, one almost wants to say stubbornly, regional orientation.

This kind of reach continued when Bob began publishing *Messing About*, though it has gradually become less regionally focused than the previous publications, owing to its remarkably international readership. It has been a constant source of amazement to me that Bob and I worked side by side back then for six years and it never came out that we were both closet boat enthusiasts. But I digress…

Which gets us to the other gig I landed in a somewhat unconventional way. I often had difficulty getting published in "mainstream" magazines because editors found my style too casual, too conversational and sometimes (I suspect) too abrasive. In an article that appeared in *Messing About* I had taken publisher John Wilson to task about what I considered to be the sad shift in the tone and tenor of *WoodenBoat*. I summed it up by saying, "When it began publishing, *WoodenBoat* dressed in paint spattered coveralls. Now, it dresses in Armani suits."

This was shortly after my first full season with the *Pamplemousse*, my rude and rustic homebuilt flat iron sailing skiff, and it was by way of complaining that, in the early days, *WoodenBoat* had been about having a pissing good time with, and in, boats kind of like this great little journal you're holding in your hands, but it had evolved into a glossy coffee table magazine about boats that only a few hundred people in the entire world could afford to own.

The boats pictured and described were often precious artifacts. God forbid that you should spill mustard on the varnished solid bubinga galley table. The craft of boat building was being elevated to something approaching the sacramental, to be performed only by the anointed masters, and nothing else would do.

In no time at all John Wilson was on the phone to Bob asking, "Who is this guy?!? Why is he saying these awful things, about my magazine, in your magazine?!?" He was clearly upset…more than you'd think a remarkably successful publisher would be.

Bob simply said, "The guy is entitled to express his opinion. And there is some truth in what he wrote." Bob passed this story along to me, over lunch at his kitchen table, on one of my trips down to visit my family in New Hampshire. So, on the way back to Nova Scotia, I decided to take a detour to the *WoodenBoat* complex in Maine.

Wow…some layout! The *Pamplemousse* would have been as out of place in that little corner of paradise as a steroid crazed NFL linebacker at a convention of ballet dancers. Since I was there, I asked a cheerful receptionist-looking young woman if John Wilson were about the premises. She enquired whether I had an appointment and I replied, "Uhm..no, but you can tell him Ernie Cassidy would like to meet with him."

Jeeez, you'd have thought I had said, "The ghost of Howard Chapelle is here." John appeared in less than a minute. We got some coffee and then went off to a cozy corner and talked for the better part of an hour. He told me that he'd really been stung by my criticism, even though he'd busted his ass to make *WoodenBoat* into the magazine it had become, and was very proud of having done that.

I admitted that I enjoyed the magazine for what it was, but felt that it had pretty much abandoned the people on whom that success had originally been built, people like…well, uhmm…me. People who'd built humble little boats, using what craftsmanship they had (admittedly very little, in my case), but were having a great time, learning a lot, including how to become better craftsmen, and were just as proud of their modest accomplishment as he was of his much greater one.

In the end, I ended up liking John more than I expected to. Quite a lot, actually. He was earnest, down to earth and there was still a lot of the paint spattered coveralls in him. I mentioned that I had been working on an article about my two years of sailing with, and refinements of, the sprit sail rig on my homebuilt skiff. I added that it hadn't even occurred to me to submit it to *WoodenBoat*, because it was a bit too "funky" for the magazine in its current incarnation.

To my surprise, and delight, he said, "When you get it done, send it to us first." I did that, and a few issues later it appeared in the magazine, dazzlingly augmented by several beautiful illustrations by Anne Bray. I got a handsome check from *WoodenBoat* and a writing credit that I've been pleased to mention, at the least excuse, ever since.

Looking back over six decades there have been a lot of these "to my surprise and delight" moments in my life, and that many of them came about in ways that I couldn't have imagined beforehand.

Riding to the Danforth at Round Pond, Maine, sliding back the hatch of a Tancook Whaler at 5:30am and gazing, dumbstruck, at the sunrise reflected in a million thumb sized drops of dew on the boat's foredeck. That was one of them.

Standing outside a restaurant, watching my daughter working at her first job, waiting tables, and seeing the effect her graciousness and sparkling good humor had on her customers was another one.

Marrying my Kathy, at age 67 was one of them, too, as was watching her take charge of our new little sailboat during our first "cruise" out in St Mary's Bay.

Like the words in the chorus of the Joe Walsh song, "Life's been good to me so far."

# Why Does a Boat Suddenly Stop?

## (In the Middle of the Adriatic)

By Conbert H. Benneck

Our cruising and sailing vacation time in Yugoslavia was ending. It was time to head back to Santa Margherita, Italy, and prepare *Fun Too* for the truck trip over the Alps to the Chiemsee in Germany. The Adriatic, in typical August fashion, wasn't being kind to us rag sailors. There wasn't the slightest bit of a breeze so that a sailboat could use nature's wind as a means of propulsion. In fact, there was no movement of the wind whatsoever. Zero ... nada ... rien de tout ... totale flaute ... zilch.

However, it was ideal weather for the Venetians to fire up their lovely gleaming mahogany Riva motorboats and make fast runs over the dead flat Adriatic to the nearest Yugoslavian port. There they would buy duty free goodies; alcohol, cigarettes and perfume, which the Yugoslavians appreciated since it gave them hard currency.

We had to rely on our built-in "Iron Wind," the Universal Atomic Four engine in *Fun Too*, for help to get us back to Italy on schedule. The Adriatic Sea was an exquisite liquid blue mirror, reflecting the very occasional fleecy cloud overhead. Not a ripple marred its surface. The sun shone. Our normally friendly porpoises had deserted us to go play elsewhere, possibly to put on a show for the visiting German tourists who flocked to the lovely sandy Italian Adriatic coast beaches in summer to soak up warmth and the sun.

This is how the doldrums must have looked to becalmed sailors in olden days. Not the slightest ripple on the water's surface, nothing moved, there was nothing to see, no fish, no birds, just blue sky and sun. As the only boat on the endless horizon around us, the only ripples to be seen were the slight wake caused by *Fun Too* pushing the Adriatic's waters gently aside to let us pass. Our log repeater dial in the cockpit indicated to me that we were doing 5.8 knots on our compass course towards Santa Margherita.

The family kept themselves occupied during the passage. Hildegard was practicing playing her guitar, sitting on the foredeck. Gerhard was reading a book in the cabin. Katharina, The Admirable, was stretched out on a cockpit cushion, a large straw hat over her face, sound asleep. I stood in the cockpit with the tiller between my legs, eyes sweeping the horizon, hoping to see some movement, any movement, as I watched the compass card in front of me, located in the bridge deck. We were right on course.

Our Universal Atomic Four engine was happily running at 2300rpm, our normal cruising speed, pushing us along at hull speed. There were the normal comforting boat sounds, the reliable cruising speed engine purr and the slight burble of the exhaust at the stern. This went on hour after hour as we followed our course, slowly leaving the Yugoslavian half of the Adriatic to enter the Italian waters. We were making steady progress towards Santa Margherita, which was still many nautical miles ahead of us over the horizon.

The restful calm and soothing monotony of a voyage under power was interrupted by a loud howl from the Atomic Four as the engine revolutions climbed to record highs. The propeller had also started cavitating and was adding to the loud racket. I grabbed the engine throttle lever, pulling it back to idle, and took it out of forward drive What is going on? Why the sudden revving of the engine and the cavitating of the propeller? *Fun Too* was now dead in the water.

Our log in the cockpit read 0. Gerhard called me from the cabin to tell me that the log was beeping. (It did this if seaweed had fouled the tiny propeller that gave it its operating signal or if the tiny propeller wasn't turning.) *Fun Too* had come to a slow, very gentle, but total stop in the middle of the Adriatic. Not one of us had noticed or felt a thing. Huh? What had happened?

We can't have run aground. According to our chart, which lay on the cockpit seat cushion, we had at least 35 meters of water under the keel, and we certainly didn't hit anything, there was no sudden jar, we had just come to a very gentle but inexplicable stop with no physical feeling of hitting anything, or running aground, or any other indication of why.

As Captain, being in command, the ball was in my court. What do I do now? I didn't have a clue. Without the faintest idea of why we were stopped, and for lack of anything better to do, I walked to the bow to see if I could see anything, hoping to see a mud bank that wasn't on the charts perhaps ... or a sand bar ... or maybe the dreaded Kraken had wrapped a tentacle around the keel and was holding us tight in its grip with another of its tentacles ready to reach up and explore the deck for something edible. Nothing could be seen. The water was clear and visibility was excellent.

We were dead in the water and there wasn't the slightest clue as to why this had occurred. There was neither mud bank nor sandbar. Kraken tentacles weren't visible either. I walked back to the cockpit, totally mystified by what had just happened. Everyone was now in the cockpit wondering what had happened and started offering suggestions. I tried going forward again, moving the shift lever to forward drive, and added a bit of throttle. The propeller cavitated loudly again. I went back to idle and took it out of forward drive.

Finally, several minutes later, for lack of a better idea, I walked forward again and stood at the bow, looking down into the deep blue Adriatic water, still totally perplexed as to why we were stopped. Nothing could be seen. There was no reef, no physical object that we had run into and no Kraken was holding us in its grasp. There was nothing to be seen but clear blue Adriatic water. But we were dead in the water. Deep water was underneath us and deep water was everywhere along our current course till we got within about 10nm of the Italian coast. We were still 23nm from where the water would start to shoal.

There was absolutely nothing out here in the middle of the Adriatic that would have caused us to come to a complete stop, and such a soft stop that no one noticed it or felt it until the engine suddenly revved up way past normal rpms because the propeller was cavitating and the engine started running in a no load condition. As I stood there, without a clue of what I should do now, I began to see a shadow of a gradual movement in the water under the hull, almost where the mast was located. As I watched with increasing astonishment, a house door came slowly sliding up from below the boat, following the curvature of the hull, until it finally came to rest at the surface, floating in the water at the bow. Eureka! The door had been the cause of our problem. This door had been floating in the Adriatic and I hadn't noticed it lying in our path.

Murphy (the originator of Murphy's Law) had decided to have some fun with the Bennecks on such a beautiful day, and with fiendish cunning he had positioned the door so that *Fun Too*'s bow would strike the door exactly in the middle of its longest dimension. That way the door would remain totally balanced for what happened next. As the bow of the boat rode up on the door, the forward motion caught the door and began to force the door downward from its horizontal position on the water surface. It had to follow the curvature of the hull below the bow, and as it got deeper the curve became more vertical in front of the keel. The 6'6" high door that was 48" wide became an extremely effective water brake. It went from 0% effectiveness floating on the surface to 100% effectiveness in its near vertical position in front of the keel.

Now that the door floated alongside of us and everyone had seen it, I reconnected the engine to the propeller, gradually increased the rpms and *Fun Too* obediently went back to our 5.8 knots cruising speed. The remainder of our journey to Santa Margherita was uneventful. Now that's as oddball a sailing experience as one can ever experience.

It was also our trip on which I was certain that I had loaded my camera with a roll of 36 picture film, only to find that when I had reached the 39th and 40th picture I could still keep shooting. I became suspicious, opened the camera in a makeshift darkroom and investigated. That was how I discovered that all our vacation photos weren't there because I had not put film in the camera. My "Admirable" and our children still hold that against me to this day. A wonderful Yugoslavian vacation cruise, complete with the door episode, and we didn't have a single photo to show of where we had been, what we had seen and what we had experienced.

Sailing trips are not easy, nor for the faint hearted.

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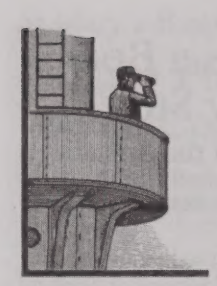


# Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

It's the shore-based cargo handling infrastructure, not ship design, that will restrict container ship size, predicted one naval architect.

Overall US maritime cargo volumes in the Great Lakes region are recovering from the extreme lows experienced in 2009. The US Great Lakes maritime industry is generally healthy and providing efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transportation services.

Planning to exploit the Arctic for oil and gas exploration and shipping is "intellectual masturbation" claimed one energy consultant. The problem is that many plans for the Arctic overlook the human element. The harsh environment, with its thick ice, storms and darkness is excessively challenging for seafarers and rig workers.

**Thin Places and Hard Knocks**

Ships sank: The bulker *Harita Bauxite* sank in Philippine waters probably because heavy rolling caused its cargo to shift and the crew was unable to correct the listing because ballast pumps could not be started as a result of a power failure. The lone fatality in the crew of 24 was vessel's Myanmar chief cook. The ship was reportedly carrying a cargo of nickel ore from Obi, Indonesia, to China. (Nickel ore is a dangerous cargo if too wet and has sunk many ships. The ore slides and the vessel may take an irremediable list.)

At Port Klang in Malaysia, the ro-ro/pax *Fajar Samudera* sank in the deepest part of the port. It had been under detention for more than three years.

Ships allided and collided: While manoeuvering at Jeddah in western Saudi Arabia, the container ship *Maersk Kotka* hit fleetmate *Maersk Kalmar*. The *Maersk Kalmar* was heavily damaged.

While passing through the crowded Strait of Singapore, the containership *Thuan My* suddenly veered across of the bow of the bulker *Beks Halil*. Remarkably, only a cargo hatch on the *Thuan My* was damaged.

In Australia at Freemantle, the fully loaded cargo ship *Princess Mary* lost power, "nudged into the North quay" and then ran aground.

Ships made contact with the bottom: Some helmsmen seem to be fascinated by lighthouses and steer for them. That might have been what happened when the LPG carrier *Carnival* (ex-*Josefa Gabtriela Silang*) ran aground 100 metres from the Aqutaya lighthouse in the southern Philippines. But the ship was actually trying to avoid several fishing boats. The vessel was freed the next day by sister ship *BC 2*.

In the Suez Canal, the crude oil tanker *Volga* grounded at Km 42 when engine failure led to loss of rudder control. Prompt response by Canal authorities got the tanker free in a little over four hours. Also in Egypt, but at the entrance of the Suez Canal, the container ship *CMA CGM Chopin* ran aground at Buoy No. 80.

Fire and explosions happened: Off the coast of Portugal, the chemical tanker *Harbour Krystal* carrying light virgin naptha for Amsterdam had an explosion and fire. One crewman could not be accounted for but all tanks were still intact.

While enroute to Brazil, the ore carrier *Stellar Eagle* had a fire on board. The crew contained the fire but one of them needed medical evacuation.

While anchored off Luanda, the container ship *Niledutch Cape Town* had an engine room fire. The crew quenched the fire, the ship was towed to a berth and unloaded and then the tug *Fairplay 30* towed the damaged ship to Cape Town for permanent repairs.

At Hamburg, observers noted smoke coming from the cargo vessel *Cap Diego*. (It was due to welding work that set insulation to smouldering.) The next morning, fumes were detected in the No. 4 hold so the insulation was torn out.

People died: The parents of a drowned sailor shared the same rope when they committed suicide by hanging in their residence in Arakkonam in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. They blamed the government and the shipping agency for negligence and inaction after the tanker *Pratibha Cauvery* ran aground off the Chennai Coast last October. Their son died when a lifeboat capsized while trying to reach the Besant Nagar Beach.

Bad things happened: At Puerto Limon in Costa Rico, a ship's crane on the container ship *Freemantle Express* was being used to place a "pontoon" (cargo hatch cover) over a hold when the pontoon somehow became detached and fell onto 16 containers. Multiple dents resulted.

Two large pieces of a 50' Hatteras motorboat, a body, ten lifejackets, flares and an oil sheen were discovered floating 22 miles off Jacksonville, Florida. The body belonged to a Venezuelan. Authorities learned that two other Venezuelans had been on board and probably an American boat captain.

At Oakland, California, a large barge-mounted crane was removing temporary structure on the new eastern span of the Bay Bridge when a 129-ton piece slipped out of a carry basket and dropped into the harbor. Said a nearby security guard, "It sounded like a jet, like something taking off, so we all looked to the sky. The rushing was followed by a clanking sound, then an immense splash."

**Gray Fleets**

It took ten highly specialized vessels to dismantle the mine countermeasures vessel *USS Guardian*, stranded on the edge of Tubbataha Reef in the Philippines. As best I understand the process, the massive crane on the pipe lay construction ship *Jascon-25* plucks off a chunk of the *Guardian*, swings it over onto the deck barge *S-7000*, which is then towed by the *Trabajador-1* to the smaller crane ship *Smit Borneo* anchored nearby in deeper water. It offloads the chunk onto the *Archon Tide* for transport to a disposal site. At one time, the *Guardian* salvage fleet consisted of the *JASCON-25*, the *SMIT Borneo*, the salvage ships *USNS Salvor* and *USNS Safeguard*, the large Navy cargo-carrier *USNS Wally Schirra*, the *Archon Tide* (an anchor handling tug supply boat), *Intrepid* (an otherwise unidentified tug), the salvage tug *Trabajador-1*, Malay Towage's barge *S-7000* and the Philippine Coast Guard search and rescue vessel *BRP Pampanga*.

The US Navy is on a synthetic fuel kick, purportedly to make sure it will never depend on oil from unfriendly nations, but eyebrows (particularly those of appropriations rival Air Force) were raised when among the various biofuels the US Navy has purchased were 55 gallons (one barrelful) of "cobalt n-Butanol to Jet fuel" at $245,000 or $ 4,454.55 per gallon. No doubt that price included some R&D.

The 4,800-ton *Trafalgar* class hunter killer sub *HMS Tireless* may be getting tired. While on training exercises for new officers off Scotland's west coast, a coolant leak was contained within the reactor compartment. The leak "posed no risk to the public, the environment or the crew," but it is not known how long it would take to repair the 28-year-old submarine, expected to be decommissioned this year.

**White Fleets**

The cruise ship *Carnival Triumph* received the world's attention when a fire disabled its engines soon after leaving Cozumel, Mexico. Quickly extinguished by automatic systems, the fire left the ship powerless. That meant its nearly 3,200 passengers were bereft of cruise ship niceties such as air conditioning, hot meals, flushable toilets, elevators, cell phone connectivity to land based cell towers and arcade games. Since the ship was only 150 miles out from the Yucatán Peninsula, the initial decision was to return to a shipyard at Progreso. However, when the Mexican-flagged, Progreso-based tug *Dabhol* arrived, the Gulf of Mexico's Loop Current had carried the *Triumph* 90 miles to the north so the destination was changed to Mobile, Alabama, and the American salvage ship *Resolve Pioneer* was ordered to set out from Key West.

Upon arrival, it took the *Triumph* in tow at a steady 5-6mph while the *Dabhol*, trailing on a stern line, provided corrective nudges whenever the *Triumph* veered off course. Other members of the Carnival fleet (*Carnival Elation*, *Carnival Legend*, *Carnival Conquest*) stopped by to ferry over food including hot meals, water and supplies. Perhaps most important for many passengers, they temporarily provided cell phone connectivity to the media and anxious relatives.

Nearing Mobile, the Port Fourchon-based tug *Roland A. Falgout* was ordered to join the convoy. Soon after its arrival, the pilot in charge of the towing convoy ordered a speed-up to 7.5 mph. The additional speed triggered unfixable winch problems on the *Pioneer* so the *Falgout* took over the tow. Harbor tugs *Hawk* and *Lisa Cooper* came out from Mobile to help steer the big ship in the narrow channel to Mobile and soon after they docked the ship. Soon afterwards the 3,143 passengers debarked, most with stories to tell and fascinating memories for the future. Later that day the *Carnival Triumph*, with its deck and engine room crews still on board, was towed to a nearby shipyard for repairs, after all, the next cruise was only two months away.

At Wellington, New Zealand, the *Seabourn Odyssey* lost all power as it approached Aotea Quay and a Centreport tug continued towing the vessel to its assigned berth. A problem in a power cable had become apparent when engineers energized the bow thrusters for docking.

Also at Wellington, the Centreport tug *Toia*, crowded with 50 guests of the city's

"Open Day" celebration, hit the lowered landing stage of the *Queen Elizabeth*. (How embarassing!) The combined funnel/mast of the tug departed from the vertical but the 40-year-old tug remained in service.

About 70 miles from Panama City, the expedition ship *Sea Lion* hit an uncharted rock while departing an anchorage at the Las Perlas Islands. The propeller and hull were damaged but none of the 55 passengers or 35 crew was hurt.

**Those That Go Back and Forth**

You take a ride on New York's Staten Island ferry and it's "free" but the real cost to New York taxpayers is $4.68, up 57% from a decade earlier. But it was $5.69 in 2008!

The Sausalito-San Francisco ferry *San Francisco* collided with a 22' boat near Raccoon Strait. One man on the small boat later died of his injuries and the other man was seriously injured.

The Nova Scotia provincial government rejected both of two proposals for renewing ferry service between Portland, Maine, and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, even though one firm had already leased a suitable large ferry.

In Newfoundland, the Mayor of St Brendan's (2011 population of 147) was notably verbal about the provincial government's plans to shuffle around its ferries to accommodate refit work. She wanted to make sure the community doesn't lose its ferry service.

In New Zealand, the inter-island ferry *Kaitaki* aborted its daily voyage across the Cook Strait to Picton and returned to Wellington after an elderly woman suffered an apparent heart attack.

In Scotland, the operator of the small vehicular ferry *Island Trader* failed to hoist the bow ramp before setting off across the River Clyde at Glasgow. Passengers were forced to jump on seats or retreat to the ferry's after areas. No prosecution of the skipper left some passengers quite angry.

In Wales, the ro-ro/pax *Finnarrow* slammed into the quay at Holyhead's ferry terminal hard enough to disable itself. Rather low in the water back aft due to a problem with the ship's stabilizers, it was towed to a drydock for attention while officials scurried to restore the ferry service to Dublin.

In the Turkish Black Sea port of Zonguldak, the ro-ro/pax *Cenk Y* had a fire on its vehicle deck that started in the cooling unit of a citrus laden reefer truck and spread to other trailers. Ship and shore firefighters killed the fire in two hours.

In Norway while entering the Troll Fjord, the ro-ro/pax *King Harold* struck rocks. The bulbous bow took a bashing and a ballast tank was breached but none of the 258 passengers or 57 crew were hurt. The ferry proceeded to Svolvaer to unload passengers. From there, the ferry headed for a shipyard near Åalesund.

At Singapore, the ferry *Sea Hawk* collided with the coaster *Budi Jasa 18*. The coaster sank, killing one mariner.

Are you a government entity needing a new ferry? How about a 200' long vessel, the world's first icebreaking catamaran capable of carrying 20 cars and 120 passengers? For free! In Alaska, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough has an albatross around its neck. It accepted the $80 million ferry *Susitana*, built partially with US Navy funds, to explore the potential of an experimental landing craft design, but it now sits at a Ketchikan dock, unused but eating up about $90,000 a month in dock fees and insurance. Writing applications for necessary permits, their cost and building the necessary landings mean the ferry is essentially unusable, hence the "ferry-for-free" offer. Said one assemblyman in dismay, "I would look for the ray of sunshine in this, but I can't find it."

**Legal Matters**

Three people boarded the 82' sailboat *Darlin* at Sausalito, California, carrying with them ample stocks of pizza and beer. They then headed south on a joy ride but the yacht ran aground on a beach near Pacifica. The owner recognized his luxury boat on TV news and called the police. They persuaded the trio to surrender and they were held on suspicion of grand theft conspiracy with the bail set at more than $1 million.

At Wellington, New Zealand, three men jumped off the back of the Cook Strait ferry *Santa Regina* after the ferry had moored at its Glasgow Wharf berth and shut down its engines. The trio received fines under harbour bylaws. Navigation and Safety Bylaw 2.2 states that, "without the permission of the Harbourmaster, no person may dive or swim within 50 metres of any structure in the commercial wharf area."

**Nature**

The US National Hurricane Center revealed that Hurricane *Sandy* was the second costliest cyclone to hit the US since 1900. Preliminary damage estimates are near $50 billion. In addition, there were at least 147 direct deaths recorded across the Atlantic basin due to *Sandy*, 72 of them in the mid-Atlantic and northeastern United States This was the greatest number of US direct fatalities related to a tropical cyclone outside of the southern states since Hurricane *Agnes* in 1972. *Sandy* made landfall late on October 29 near Brigantine, New Jersey, but its tremendous size drove a catastrophic storm surge into the New Jersey and New York coastlines.

NASA's Aquarius instrument package in the Argentine SAC-D spacecraft (it was launched by an American rocket) has been tracking salinity levels in the world's oceans for over a year. The Aquarius sensor detects the microwave emissivity of the top 1 to 2 centimeters (about an inch) of ocean water, a physical property that varies depending on temperature and saltiness. Visible have been seasonal pulses of freshwater from the Amazon River, an invisible seam dividing the salty Arabian Sea from the fresher waters of the Bay of Bengal and a large patch of freshwater that appears in the eastern tropical Pacific in the winter. But the most prominent feature is a large patch of highly saline water across the North Atlantic. This area, the saltiest anywhere in the open ocean, is analogous to deserts on land, where little rainfall and a lot of evaporation occurs.

**Metal-Bashing**

While the ultra-large container ship *OOCL Brussels* was being tested by its Korean builder, the propeller was damaged and then shaft bearings were damaged while parts were being removed for repair. The 13,208-teu new building, part of an order for ten ultra large container ships placed by the line in 2011, will be delivered somewhat late.

The semi-submersible heavy lift ship *Xiang Rui Koa* left China for Dutch Harbor, Alaska, where it was to pick up the damaged Royal Shell Oil's conical drill rig *Kulluk*, the focus of much recent media attention when it broke free from multiple towing vessels multiple times off Alaska. Destination? An unannounced repair facility, probably in the Far East.

At a shipyard in Germany, a stubborn fire attributed to welding on the new building cruise ship *Norwegian Getaway* did not affect the nearby sister *Norwegian Breakaway*. Fire brigades from surrounding communities were alerted after the shipyard's forces did not succeed at first. Both gates of the building hall were opened so that the smoke could be ventilated and the inhabitants of Halte, Weener and Stapelmoor were asked to keep their windows and doors closed but the fire was under control within two hours.

A West Coast shipyard has ordered a very large floating drydock from a Chinese builder. At 960' long and with a lifting capacity of 80,000 tons, it can handle all but the largest cruise ships and the owner expects it may attract business from oil and gas exploration firms and other ship operators taking advantage of longer ice-free Arctic summers. The dock will be towed to the US in three pieces and its first job after assembly will probably be to prepare the company's smaller, Portland-based drydock for use at Seattle.

**Odd Bits**

Last July in mid Atlantic, containers on the *MSC Flaminia* caught fire. Weeks later the stubborn fires were finally extinguished and the ship was towed to Germany. There 37,000 tonnes of contaminated water in its holds were pumped into the product tanker *OW Atlantic* and transported to Nyborg in Denmark where a company specializes in the incineration of wastewater with high temperatures.

Shipping out lead, zinc and other concentrates often requires barging them several miles to bulkers in deep water. This is true at the Red Dog mine in Alaska and also at the Port of Karumba on the Gulf of Carpentaria in northern Australia. There the captain of the powered barge *Wumna* noticed the vessel wouldn't steer. The 1.6-tonne rudder had fallen off and a week-long search by side scan sonar and a magnetic survey failed to find it. A replacement rudder was ordered from Germany. (When it has steering, the *Wumna* transports 5,000 dwt of concentrates at a time, or 1,000,000 tonnes per annum. Operating the barge has its risks. In February, 2007, the barge was swamped and disabled by Tropical Cyclone *Nelson* and the owners were advised that the *Wumna* was "far from a typical seagoing example.")

Two elderly tugs of the Royal Navy's "Dog" class (all originally named after breeds of dogs) slipped out of Newlyn in West Cornwall for an unknown destination in spite of being detained because of major defects. The *Juliette Pride 1* (ex-*Sheepdog*) and *Juliette Pride 2* (ex-*Huskie*) now fly the flag of Tanzania and are owned by a Nigerian oil trader who already has four other "Dogs" supporting his tanker business.

**Head-Shakers**

A British charity shop was trying to sell some donated video games on eBay. Only a game about Pearl Harbor was sold and the winning bid came from Japan.

# My Ocean Explorer

By Marshall Katz
smallboatsailor@hotmail.com

OK, when you first observe the little Ocean Explorer, it's kind of strange. Is that really a proper boat, you might ask? Well, let me assure you that this is quite the proper boat and she can please most any sailor with her many good sailing qualities. To start with, her basic hull is a Puddle Duck Racer designed by Michael Storer and raced by more than a thousand home builder sailors. The enclosed cabin with sliding hatch was designed by Perttu Korhonen from Finland. There are windows all around and room inside for a 6-footer to sleep. The quarters are close but it is quite comfortable.

The Ocean Explorer is easy to rig with its hollow mast and very easy to launch. Raising the sail and getting underway are a simple matter made easier with a set of built-in blocks. She sails without much heeling because of the flat bottom and is very responsive to the helm. One does not need to jump around when tacking. She tacks like the little lady she is, genteel. I think this boat will always be fun to sail, the same way that a sports car is always fun to drive. One looks forward to taking her out for a spin or, in this case, a sail.

The plans for this boat are about the best I've ever used, really easy to build and very strong construction. You can hardly make a mistake the plans are so detailed. In my Ocean Explorer I've added a few items like the bow mounted anchor and a motor mount for my little 1½hp Evinrude motor. The bow anchor is in a bracket and can be set and retrieved right from the cockpit. This allows me to anchor out for a lunch break and a proper nap. Yes, as one ages a good nap can rejuvenate the strength needed to sail into the afternoon.

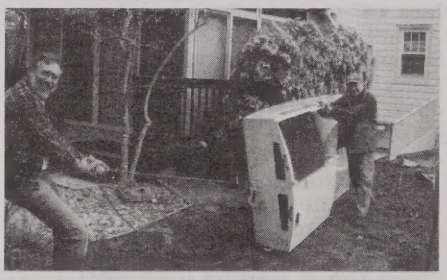
With one season with this boat in the record books I'm certainly looking to get back on the Potomac River where I do most of my sailing. This year I think I'll try an overnighter. Maybe on a night with a full moon. If any of you have not tried being out on the water on a night with a full moon, do so. It's shimmering beauty is haunting. Anyway, thank you for reading this. This boat has allowed me to keep boating, which I am thankful for.

At the dock ready to sail.

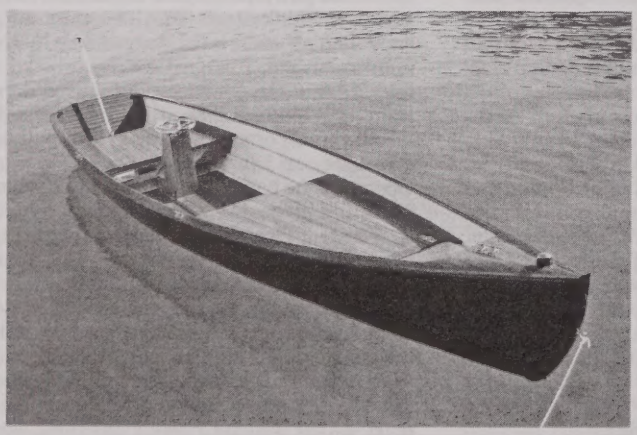
Returning from a cruise.

Up eight steps (removed for the occasion) from the womb in my basement into the birth canal.

Coming into the world.



ELECTRIC SKIFF



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# A 96" World Cruising Dinghy

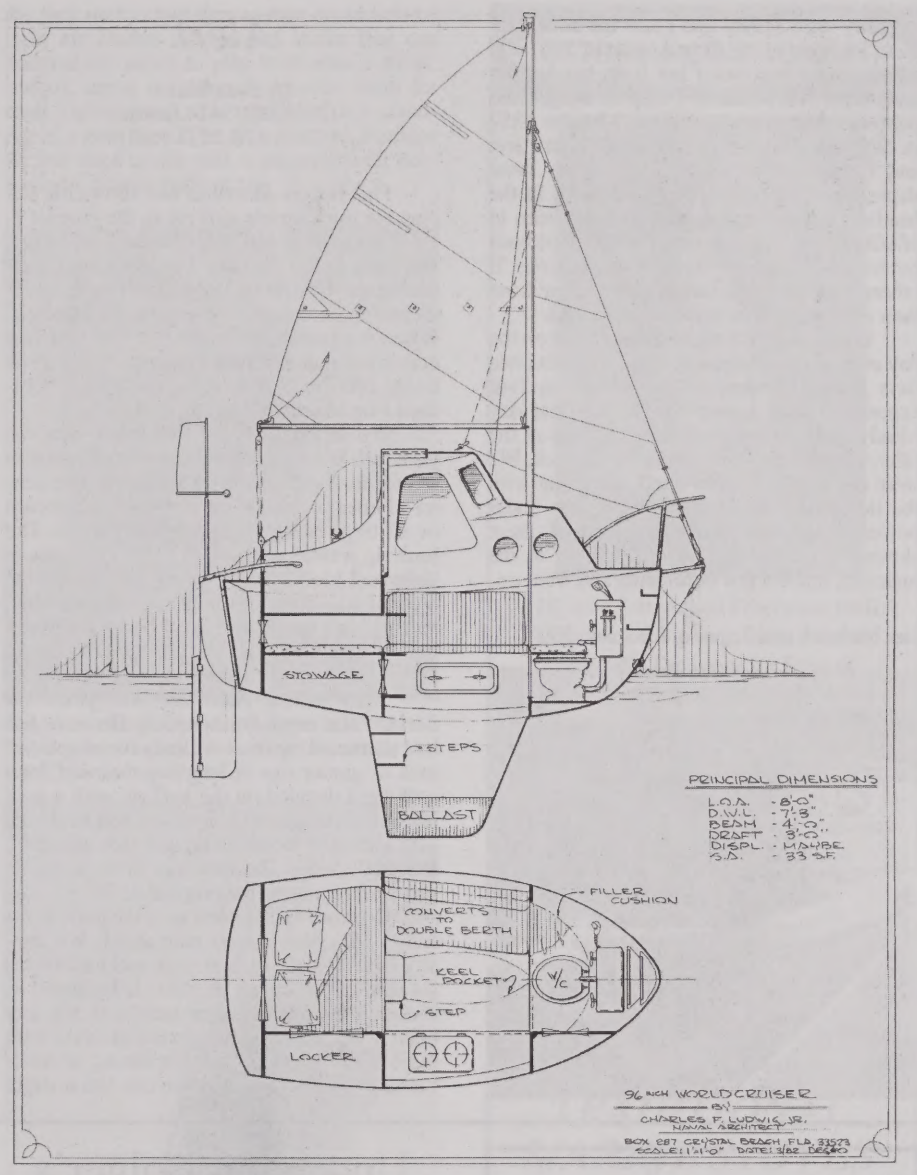
Hey y'all, I was diggin' through my files the other day and ran across this, Design #0, a 96" World Cruising Dinghy. Maybe I'd better explain. I'm always looking for the perfect design to fit any particular parameter (heck, I hope I spelled that right, I'm not sure I even know what it means). I was playing around one day a few years ago trying to find the perfect mix of solutions and compromises to design the perfect small world cruising yacht for my own use

She had to be only large enough for one (me) and small enough to fit in my carport when not actually sailing around the world, yet large enough to carry everything that I would need for a protracted cruise. She needed to be easy to handle, room for a head and galley without compromising sleeping accommodations, self-steering so I could take extended naps, roomy above and below with full standing headroom, stowage for whatever food I would need that I couldn't catch. A couple of cans of bean soup should be enough. Water wouldn't be a problem, it's all around me. I think that I have achieved all of this quite admirably, don't y'all?

Here are a few of my solutions for your admiring perusal. I solved the size dilemma by intentionally designing everything to the smallest possible dimensions. One reason for this requirement was that I couldn't afford dock space or mooring. For some reason my design business just wasn't bringing in the income that I thought it would. That also meant that I couldn't afford anything bigger. I suppose that some people actually thought that I was too radical! Imagine that. Well, anyone who thinks like I do is just "ahead of his time." (*Designer's note*: it's now 30 years after this design and I'm STILL ahead of my time.)

Next was the requirement that she be easy to handle. That one was easy. Small size with a small rig. What could be more practicable (for y'all who are of the younger set, this is an old form of the word "practical"). Now for the galley, head and sleeping accommodation. Notice the "space saver head" (patent applied for). W/C, shower, sink, toothbrush holder and all the rest in one, self-contained unit. Now, what could be more practical than that? Notice that the entire accommodation below becomes one great big berth! Shoot, I may have to rethink my statement about only having accommodation for one! Trouble is, my wife (Miss Debbie) only will go daysailing with me. Something about missing her "real" bathroom at home. Hrumfff!!!

Now for the spaciousness below. Full standing headroom in a 96" yacht! WOW! What design genius! (OK, I guess that's enough of the "!!!" for now, but ya gotta admit, this is excitin' stuff…) Well, I do have to admit that toe room is a bit cramped down in the well. But who wants to stand anyway with all that room to stretch out in.




Some have indicated that they didn't believe that I had designed in enough stowage. Those same people just don't have enough imagination. All I would need is room for a net and some fishing gear, there is plenty of food swimming all around the boat all the time. And water? Haven't you ever seen those personal reverse osmosis pumps that Boy Scouts carry when they go camping? Ha! Problem solved.

You may have noticed the apparent lack of an engine. Who wants such a stinky thing taking up precious space in such a small boat? Not to mention the need to carry fuel. I took care of that little problem in a most ingenious manner. Pay attention y'all, you just might learn something here. When the wind isn't blowing, you don't need the sails, right? So take the two-piece mast apart, screw a frying pan into each section and voila, oars. You did notice the oarlocks didn't you? Now tell me that isn't clever. Oh, and if the seas build and the wind blows up, well, it's too hard to sail, too. Just climb into the berth and take a rest. This little boat is just like a fishing bobber and you never saw a bobber sink, did you?

Oh, and the self steering gear. I couldn't quite figure out how that would work but I figure that anyone silly enough to actually build this boat should just figure that out for themselves!

So there you have it, see you out on the sound real soon, y'all.

# *Alert*

By Stan Blake
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My wife Mindy and I saw the advertisement for *Alert* in *MAIB* in August of 2007 and subsequently purchased her from her builder and owner Jim Melcher. Philip C. Bolger had published her plans in 1980 as Manatte #357 in *Different Boats*. Jim named his boat *Alert* and Bolger subsequently adopted the same name. Her cartoon is one of the boats in the heading for Bolger's regular column seen in *MAIB*. There were four or six Alerts to be built but we think Jim Melcher built the only one. If others were built we would like to hear from their owners, former owners or builders.

I spent my first night aboard *Alert* on the day of purchase, August 8, 2007. The next two days Jim and I went sailing. It was my first experience with a junk rig. On the third day Mindy and I sailed with Jim. Jim was at the tiller, we were forward sitting on the deck. We were running with light wind and going with the tide. Other boats were passing us under power, their sails lowered. Some of them slowed down, looked at Jim, looked at the junk sail, made a few comments and went on.

Jim Melcher and I raising the mast, 2008.

Phil Bolger describes and shows his sail plan for the Chinese gaff rig in the August 1, 1997 issue of *MAIB*, "A Chinese Gaff Rig," and later in the January 15, 1999 issue presented an "Update on Bolger's Chinese Gaff" including photos of *Alert* sailing with that rig. When we purchased *Alert* Jim Melcher had converted that sail to a junk rig. Phil's 1984 book, *100 Small Boat Rigs*, includes a "Chinese Lug Mainsail" similar to *Alert*'s.

We sailed *Alert* for two years with the junk sail. We found that the center of area was too far forward creating a lee helm. The center of effort could be moved slightly forward or aft by moving the rig forward or aft. The junk rig was complex with a great number of lines and blocks and rigging. All control of the sail was done from the cockpit: hoisting, reefing, sheeting, lowering. I broke the boom once when I jibed when I should not have. She sailed well with the broken boom.

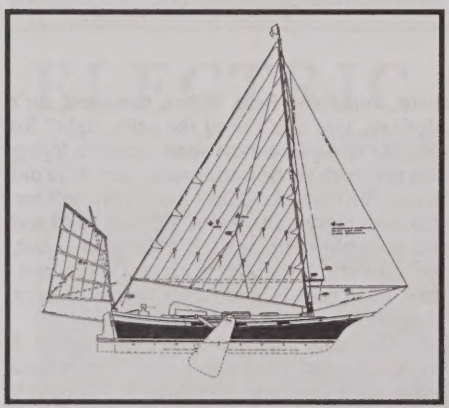
After sailing *Alert* for two years we decided she needed a new sail. Because Jim had shortened the mast we had several options, junk or gunter rigs or lengthen the mast for a gaff rig. I decided on the gaff rig with a sprit boom and designed the new sail and made the gaff and sprit boom. The sail was made by Bohndell Sails. The new sail area, 434sf, is almost the same as the original 450sf.

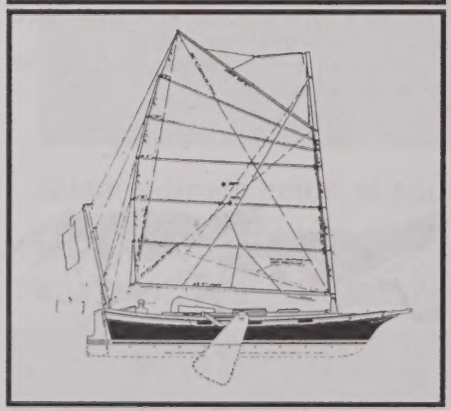
We have sailed *Alert* with the gaff rig for four years. She is over canvassed. We usually sail with one or two reefs and had a third set of reef points put in. *Alert* is balanced as a cat rig. She will run or tack with the leeboards up. She will also go to windward with the leeboards up but with a strong weather helm. With a leeboard down she has a slight weather helm and goes windward well. She keeps her weather helm with three reefs tied in. Sometimes we sail her with a small mizzen as a cat yawl. The mizzen helps her come about but makes her more complex. With her long, shallow keel she comes about slowly and sometimes loses way and will not come about. She will sometimes luff and go aback. Sometimes we jibe or start the motor to help come about.

Once on the Penobscot River while under power going with a strong current and against a very strong wind, she broached. Luckily there were no buoys or boats nearby. We came about, got out of the strong current and into shallow water. The rest of that trip was slow but not as challenging.

Jim Melcher died on April 2, 2010. Mindy and I wish we had known him longer. As a builder, sailor, navigator and friend, Jim was gifted. Jim was not a bragger. He did not assume that he knew everything and that others knew less. He kept on learning and questioning.

*Alert* in 2009 as a cat yawl, one reef tied in.





# Update on Bolger's Chinese Gaff

Exerpted from *MAIB*, January 1, 1999

In *MAIB* Vol 15, #6, August 1, 1997, we discussed upgrading Jim Melcher's well cruised *Alert* with this new rig geometry. Our Design #357 Manatee *Alert*, built by Jim Melcher and Naoko Inouye in Newmarket, New Hampshire, was rigged according to plans with a leg-o-mutton cat-yawl rig. Originally designed as a somewhat oversparred weekender/light coastal cruiser, Melcher began to sail the design far and wide, more or less living aboard fulltime. She grew a full headroom trunk, carries a stout dink on her foredeck and thus gained a few pounds here and there.

Jim, wife Marie and *Alert* sailed both coasts of America, the length of the East Coast once without power, trucked her across the continent in a personal flatbed rig, did the Panama Canal and the Caribbean, shipped her to Europe for extended cruising including the Baltic and inland to Berlin, for instance, and then back again. Finally a few years back they soloed her across the Atlantic eastward via Azores and Ireland, rounded the British Isles. and touched base on Europe's west coasts. He finally wrote us from the UK about a rig more suitable for cruising.

Here we should correct our article of 1997 in which we erroneously stated that he had sailed her over 100,000nm. Wherever the misunderstanding came from, it is just around 42,000nm on this home built, strip built advanced barge yacht, drawing 20" with the leeboards up. And there are still people insisting that this type of boat is unsafe and Jim has just been lucky for near 20 years.

The original rig had been tinkered with over the years, tweaked for more comfort under these more demanding conditions of near fulltime cruising, including taming her sprit boom by first shortening it and the main somewhat, to finally graft on a gooseneck for the big pond crossing.

As the before and after drawings show, regained most of her original sail area (now 524' vs. the original 540'), which is now more readily reefable on apparently just about any point of sail. Jim reported a 29-hour solo passage from Ireland to the UK, a shakedown cruise with the new rig, during which he frequently changed sail area from the cockpit to respond to increasing and then again waning winds, and was at ease about the demands on him, he is in his mid 70s now,

Near 20 years old and once designed for compression only, the original mast broke. According to Jim, the crack began at a long. visibly aging seam line now under the greater strains of the gaff geometry, Thus, we drew

a fresh mast to match this rig. Jim's Yankee use-it-up philosophy produced no injury nor serious damage to the new sail and she sailed in under her own power,

With her new mast, Jim, *Alert* and now Diane showed up in Gloucester this fall on their wedding cruise from Maine to Cuba. All looked good. So far the only nagging wrinkle in the picture is the demanding fine tuning of each batten's particular stiffness along the foil of the sail, Reminiscent of the inherent and unavoidable problem of the traditional junk rig, batten stiffness is a major preoccupation to get just right. Jim broke some of his first battens in the waters off the UK, but pointed to incorrect assembly of the units. The current ones still seem too soft where they should not be, particularly near the trailing edge. Depending on the sheeting angle, the Chinese gaff geometry can both pull the battens off the mast against the parrels going upwind, and then compress them running off.

Each of these rigs will thus require repeated pulling of the battens to either add a layer of glass/veneer or take some of it off in particular sections. Since we designed the battens to have simple bolt through the sailcloth batten jaws to ride against the round mast, two wrenches will unlock the batten from the cloth and the jaws for quick removal, a clear advantage either for offshore repairs or just initial breaking in of the as yet unadjusted battens. Jim's rig is thus not quite there yet in this issue. We'll know more next summer when he's back.

But setting sail, reefing underway, furling it into her lazyjacks are predictable and, in Jim's experience, reliable. As some of these photos here show, producing a vertically straight, no sag trailing edge on the sail is possible on just about all points of sail. There is no sag of the gaff to leeward and thus no performance robbing twist of the sail, so traditional in many gaffers, unless it seems somehow desirable to slack off the peak guy in order to spill too much wind quickly.

There is no inherent permanent twist related straining of the cloth which is bound to prematurely deteriorate any shape cut into it. And while, depending upon sheeting geometry and panel number, the Chinese gaff rig's lower panel can benefit from a light boom vang and can often be accommodated right off the bat, Melcher's *Alert* offers not enough space below the boom for an efficient setup. In practice, this point seems not to matter too much in the overall equation of cost vs benefit vs drawbacks. In new designs with this rig geometry we've solved that issue in a number of ways. We'll discuss one such example in a future issue.

In any Chinese gaff rig's case, there is an absolute minimum of strains as the sheet pull more aft than down, a more sensible geometry in any light than the conventional gaffer's and the traditional junk rig's. Even the light boom vang is controlling just the lowest panel and does not constantly strain all seams across the cloth from bottom to gaff at a decidedly unhealthy angle just to attempt to control that sag in the gaff.

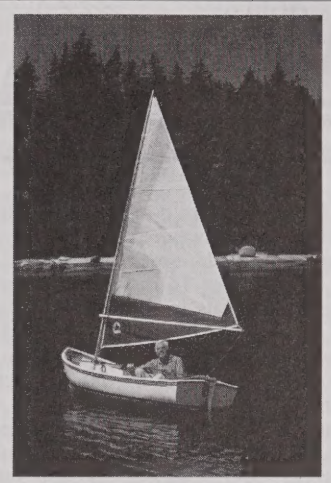
With easy reefing and unfurling, there is no need to risk extraordinary strains on the whole rig, since reefing should never be too strenuous during a demanding passage in gusty conditions, while progress can be maintained by just setting another panel. In light of this safety, we've come to design Chinese gaff rigs with well above normal sail areas, proposing to usually sail them with the first reef in and thus saving on additional light air cloths, strings and sticks that can become too much to play with after a while. Indeed, using increasingly heavier cloth for each higher panel, the last panel left standing in a gale should be able to stand. Perhaps all you need is one sail, a properly over canvassed Chinese gaff cat rig.

Broad reaching. Optimum angle of attack the full height. A good foil shape is unlike the flat Chinese lug.

Broad reaching. The top of the sail does not twist forward to start her rolling. First reef in.

Close reaching. Battens too flexible at the leech end.

KITTERY POINT TENDER



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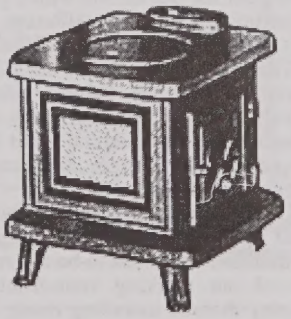

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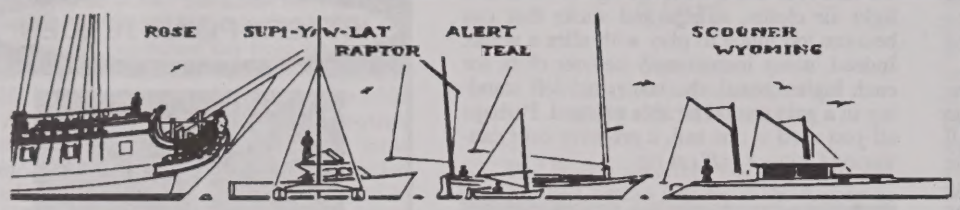



**PHIL BOLGER & FRIENDS, INC**
**BOAT DESIGNERS**
**PO BOX 1209**
**GLOUCESTER, MA 01930**
**FAX 978-282-1349**

# Phil Bolger & Friends on Design

## Messing About in Fishing Boats Chapter 16

By Susanne Altenburger

This has been a long narrative already. For those who noticed a hick-up in the sequence, it would appear that indeed there were two Chapter 14 installments but with different materials in each. The November 2010 (Vol 28 No 7) had the correct chapter number across pages 47-49, with the February 2011 issue (Vol 28, No 10) actually featuring Chapter 15 across pages 44-47 but mislabeled "14" again. I'll blame the cat. And there are only four fingers and one thumb per hand, with the left hand's thumb on the right and the right hand's thumb, all depending on how you hold them of course. Good thing, it is always just eight fingers and two thumbs! Usually.

With that clarified, matters in the commercial fisheries here in Gloucester and the Northeast in general have had challenging times continue with circumstances deteriorating further for many. Phil and I had been watching the proceedings since 2002 and some of the developments that came to pass over the next ten years reflected our worst expectations. Hence the energy on this end here to never let go of the attempt to avert the worst, this being Phil's 'homeport' and one of the last remaining full service authentic working ports in the Northeast.

In light of growing challenges the city's administration had decided by summer 2011 to reconstitute the Gloucester Fisheries Commission, it remains nebulous to PB&F why it ever was shut down ten years earlier. At any rate, after our speaking out repeatedly and vigorously for some ten months, the Commission at last decided to write a Letter of Endorsement for our efforts which promptly was sent into all sorts of mailboxes. Here is the text of the piece, dated May 31, 2012:

"The Gloucester Fisheries Commission, representing the fishing industry of America's oldest fishing port, fully supports the "Sustainable Commercial Craft Project" developed by Phil Bolger & Friends, Inc, boat designers of Gloucester.

"Gloucester's port economy was founded upon our fishing industry and this proud tradition continues to be the economic engine of our working waterfront. Faced with many threats, including rising costs of fuel, the fishing industry of Gloucester and our City must lead in the development of low carbon operations of our commercial fishing vessels. It is essential for our fleet to prepare for the energy realities of the 21st century and find sustainable and economically viable fuel and energy solutions.

"Phil Bolger & Friends, Inc (PB&F) is proposing to design and build several prototypes to pursue a 50% reduction in diesel fuel consumption and explore renewable energy and hybrid propulsion systems for our diverse fisheries. Since 2002, PB&F has developed this project towards conceptual integrity which has now attracted broad-based support by our fleet and organizations such as the Conservation Law Foundation and Ocean Alliance.

"Much in the same way that local processing of seafood landed locally would lower energy needs to prepare product for the market, the local construction of vessels would keep costs lower as hauling vessels over roads becomes prohibitive and most sizes of these vessels dictate their construction on the harbor. As such, PB&F plans to build these boats on Gloucester's working waterfront. Local commercial boat building also offers apprenticeships to our students and opportunities for lifelong careers at good wages in an industry based on sustainability and the inescapable economics for a more fuel efficient craft in fishing and other marine industries.

"Moreover, re-establishing Gloucester-based vessel innovation and construction emphasizes once again the opportunities of value added ventures in the working harbor such as seafood processing. Designing and testing these vessels will demonstrate lean geometries with a minimized carbon footprint and should trigger the elimination of regulatory road blocks against energy efficiencies across the fleet.

"The Gloucester Fisheries Commission endorses the PB&F "Sustainable Commercial Craft Project" and encourages others to do the same."

The Gloucester Fisheries Commission was established in 1956 by act of the Massachusetts Legislature as an advisory body to the City of Gloucester on all matters related to the commercial fishing industry. The Commission currently consists of ten members nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council.

I sure was grateful to have this letter in my hands, perhaps the last piece of the puzzle now co-signed by folks, many of whom we'd asked for support across the preceding nine years. As Phil would laconically put it, "better late than never." How effective this letter would be remains uncertain. So far, the position expressed in writing here has not yet found itself into the political debates around fisheries regulations, industry bailout proposals and how all this affects port economies like Gloucester, Massachusetts. But the letter may prove to be effective elsewhere, as this spring may prove yet.

In light of the significant further deterioration of the prospects of the industry, the fleet and thus this port, seven months later another piece of more robust rhetoric went out again into those mailboxes, here in town and out of town. The impatience underlying the tone of it reflects over ten years of arguing the (seemingly) obvious, that with less fish, using boats that can operate to tighter margins may be the only answer, not an economically implausible proposition in light of federal support initiatives already mostly on the books.

So what are the odds that I'll be more or less popular with certain folks?

### Six Hard Realities Facing the Commercial Fishing Fleet in the Northeast (1/10/13)

#### Basic Understandings

The industry consists of two elements; the resource of fish, shellfish, etc, and the fishing fleet without which we'd have no fishing industry. Both are co-equal. There is no industry without either half. They are two 50% parts of one 100% whole. But 98+% of all discussions related to commercial fishing covers only one 50% part, "the resource." In the meantime, fuel has gone up 380% between the late '90s and December 2012.

But nobody offers the fleet any political and technical support to cope with that massive burden. There is no R&D into vessel types that would allow many to survive in time of limited allocations. This is the only industry that is transportation intensive in which no research, no developments, no regulatory or financial support has been pulled together in support of the fleet to help it adapt to this massive change in every vessel's economics. On this background, there are six hard realities facing the Northeast's fishing industry:

#### Economics

1. When access to the resource is limited by regulation (presumably) based on scientific concerns of stock sustainability, one way to stay in business is to migrate towards a leaner, less power and fuel intensive business model to reduce the operation's expenses. This concern goes far beyond just fuel burn, it extends to choices of engine power, size, and thus first running and finally repair and replacement costs. Ditto for gearbox, propshaft, prop. Doing the same work with much less horsepower reduces fuel burn and drive train cost. We mentioned this since Day 1 (late 2002) in conversations with fishermen, politicians, before the Council, on the written record for Amendment 13, in articles, interviews etc, etc, across now over ten years.

2. When alongside the reduction of allowable catch the cost for energy is projected to increase, and then indeed does, Principle #1 is an even more pressing issue. Between 1999 and December 2012, diesel-cost here in the Northeast has increased by now some 380%. At the same time the US economy saw an inflation rate of some 2.47% per year. In stark contrast, the diesel cost rose at 26.5% per year (inflation adjusted).

Around that time frame a barrel of oil was between $12 and $15-$16. We read that it would go to $40. Folks laughed. Then we heard $65. More snickering. Driven up by politics and speculation we would see $147.50 by mid 2008. Current "Great Recession" prices have been ranging across the last year between $84 and $109/barrel. Cost is projected to go up again as the US, Europe and China accelerate their economic growth rate again. And nobody in the fleet is prepared. And no R&D effort is going on, but we would be "shovel ready" here in Gloucester within a matter of a few months."

**Political Power**

3. In an industry based on the ecology of the ocean, its political environment is structured around ecological concerns such as the sustainability of the resource upon which the industry depends. Inevitably governmental and non governmental interests with focus upon that ecology will come to influence the discussion and thus the regulatory provisions that govern the industry. This hard reality dictates that the fishing industry engages unambiguously in that discourse from a position of strength in matters ecological.

Being an industry, a range of major technical issues are unavoidable:

a) Public support and technical collaboration towards resource sustaining catch methods, which is going on to different extents across the current catch methods, reflecting certain evolving regulatory standards.

b) Pursuit of sustainability supporting and, of course, fishing operation supporting vessel economics, an obvious economic opportunity which, however, is reflected in no regulatory agenda, industry goals or just modest research projects somewhere. Unless forced by detailed dictates such as minimum mesh size this industry has, however, not assumed political power by emphasizing that Federal and regional regulations have actually kept this industry from responding to the challenges of #1 and particularly #2. We've raised this angle many times, since too much of the regulatory discussions are seemingly more political than ecological.

4. Without convincingly potent ecological "street cred" to bring to the discussion table and to the public, this industry has too often been portrayed successfully in mostly negative terms, which in turn had led again and again to progressively destructive regulatory dictates. Whether within the various bodies of industry governance or in the marketplace of public opinion making, this industry has lost out to such an extent as to not even be able to effectively reverse that image during scandalous episodes by regulators and NGOs. The steady decline in numbers of operations, in public standing and the long term outlook of fleet and still certain fisheries thus has damaged many a port economy, eroding daily political support for the industry further.

**Status Quo**

5. By not responding early and often soon to challenge #1, ignoring #2 outright, refusing to take #3 as the most serious must-do as a matter of political and thus industry survival has resulted in #4. And with the loss in numbers, lack of preparedness for the next one, then public examples of losses all the way deep into infrastructure we cannot afford to lose, now presents this diminishing industry as an even fatter target for schemes and machinations from whichever side those may come from.

**Accountabilities Beyond and Within the Fleet**

Here are some basic questions:

1. Why has ex-NOAA Head Dr Lubchenco no track record before, or at, NOAA of supporting an advanced low carbon "green" thriving fishing fleet very able to live profitably within science based catch limits? If she was for eco system based fisheries management she surely had to include the fleet structure and each vessel's economics into her regulatory initiatives, but never did. There is no Federal research nor regional research into this vital fleet centric problem.

As it is today, the fleet, with very few exceptions, is based on thinking and reflexes of the 1970s and 1980s when supply of fuel was cheap and fish seemingly endless. As the Chief Ecological Warrior she ended up presiding without shame or hesitation up to the last day of her tenure over a spectacularly "high carbon" fleet she did nothing to help fix. Most, if not all, federal agencies have programs to help out their respective industries in some way or other. American agriculture has a zillion support programs including "Land Grant" to help out locally/regionally. Our "Sea Grant" system offers no substantive solutions to enhance the fleet's economic viability.

2. Why do no ecological groups pursue such "green fleet" policies anywhere? Running a word seach on the PEW, EDF etc Annual Reports will show in their own words how little they care to be ecological when it comes to this industry. They are not ecologists if they happily quote ecological concerns in their campaigns to weaken the industry while they have no interest in ever supporting the emergence of a "green" fishing fleet.

Just regionally: One could hold Peter Shelley of CLF, for instance, accountable for the fact that for the last five years he never publicly supported any funding towards "greening" of the fleet to help it survive

3. Why would nobody amongst the leaders of the industry, except for the Gloucester Fisheries Commission and many local fishers, ever support R&D into fishing craft prototypes that would run on a fraction of current fuel bills in order to help shore up by every means possible the fleet's daily economics? Nobody has ever heard the leaders insist on integrating in the many regulatory rounds since 2000 any provisions towards the renewal of the fleet via existing Federal and State programs. How come? Why insist on an economically weakening fleet instead of pushing to strengthen it in order to survive catch limits and ecological challenges such as Climate Change.

Why would, by 2012, Dr Lubchenko and too many fishing industry chiefs both proudly preside over a fishing fleet stuck in the 1980s?

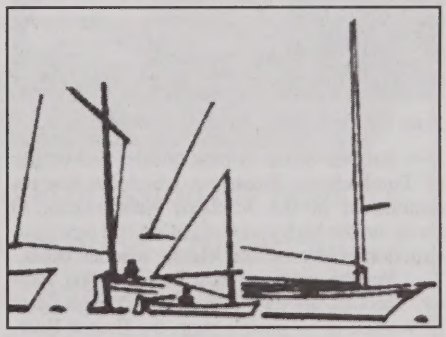
**By Early 2013: One Last Option(?)**

4. The only option to turn this around is to be more ecological than the industry's adversaries, a mantra we've preached for ten years. Neither the Feds nor the NGOs are remotely as solid on this issue as they've worked themselves into believing. Their dictates have distorted the current fishing fleet into a high carbon liability dictated to the industry with crude and indefensible policies. They owe this industry to help it migrate towards a fleet structure that reflects any semblance of ecological sensibilities the other side keeps quoting.

From PEW over EDF to CLF, none of them have any serious policy track record to point to as evidence for their advanced thinking and policy crafting. Pretty much mirroring the failures within this industry, they have massive liabilities that cannot be explained away. And unlike the tools on the table of this discussion right here, they are unable to access these, and are, in fact, upside down on any chances to continue playing the role of the intellectually or ecologically superior side in the discussion on governing this industry.

That is why it would still be easy to outgreen the Greens, if the industry chooses to do so. First major project is to get on with R&D here in Gloucester towards the "Greenest/Least Carbon Fishing-Fleet." Essentially "shovel ready," we could be well on our way within a matter of a few months. Asserting leadership in matters fleet ecology is imperative. Any chance of reasserting political power and thus industry economic sustainability depends on it.

The question is what Chapter 17 will cover…

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REUBEN SMITH'S
TUMBLEHOME
BOATSHOP
HISTORIC CRAFTSMANSHIP

# Just One Year Ago

The fundamental idea to create Reuben Smith's Tumblehome Boatshop was formed over dinner one late November evening in 2011. On February 22, 2012, we purchased our building and we've now been in our home for one year. Thanks to all our friends and customers who have helped our progress, following us on email and Facebook. We are having a great time!

In our first year we completed the restoration of two 1926 Sound Inter Club sailboats whose restoration was started when Reuben and Sean O'Neill worked at Hall's Boat Corporation. We took on a good volume of restoration projects, including a c.1900 25' fantail electric launch for a Lake George client, a 33' Hutchinson Sedan for the Antique Boat Museum in Clayton New York, a 1964 16' Lyman for a Brant Lake customer, a 1958 HiLiner for a Schroon Lake customer, a 1929 16' tender for a customer on Otsego Lake and a 1942 22' Hutchinson utility for owners on Blue Mountain Lake, among other boats.

The new shop before…

This coming summer, we will start construction on a 1924 replica race boat with a WWI aircraft engine.

During our first year, we also received three awards, two of which are boat related and the other boatshop related:

WoodenBoat Show Concours d'Elegance, lst Place Best Professionally Restored Boat, Sail

Lake George Rendezvous, Special Interest Boat

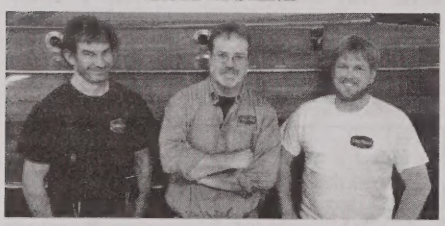
Adirondack Mountain Garden Club, Shop Grounds Beautification.

Along with Reuben, our two stalwart boat builders are Sean O'Neill and Alex Fee, along with Alex Smith and contractors Adirondack Goodboat and Meister Marine. We'll continue our commitment to providing the highest quality restoration and new construction of historic and classic wooden boats. Together, and with the support of our friends, neighbors and loyal customers, we're making more good things happen in 2013.

Our goal is to make Tumblehome Boatshop a place where your entire family is comfortable as you watch progress on your own boat and learn about the work being done on other boats.

…and after.

**Reuben Smith**



Boat builders Sean, Reuben and Alex.

Reuben Smith is boat builder and owner of Tumblehome Boatshop which he has re-established in the southern Adirondacks to focus on the high end restoration and new construction of historic and classic wooden boats.

Reuben grew up in a boat building family. Through his high school and college years he worked in his uncle's shop, the Everett Boatworks, in Canton, New York, and his father's shop, Adirondack Goodboat, in Long Lake, New York. Working with his father and uncle, Reuben was surrounded with a crew of highly skilled and committed craftsman who showed him what a fine boat building job really could be. Those shops worked on canoes, skiffs and guideboats as well as runabouts and launches. The work was primarily restoration of historic boats, but included new, and modern wooden boat building, as well.

In 1997, Reuben started Tumblehome Boatshop in a corner of the Everett Boatworks, but then had the opportunity to leave northern New York and head to the Boston area where he was Boatshop Director for the Hull Lifesaving Museum in Hull, Massachusetts. Reuben worked with a crew of adjudicated kids in Boston building and maintaining a fleet of rowing gigs from 24' to 38' long. At the museum Reuben learned how to teach boat building skills.

He left the Lifesaving Museum in 2000 and restarted Tumblehome Boatworks as the Rolling Boatshop. He built a shop in the back of a box truck and toured up and down the Massachusetts coast, subcontracting in boat yards. During this period Reuben met Cynde and they were married in 2002 and settled down in Plympton, Massachusetts. With Cynde's help he grew his reputation and his business and the two became a strong business team as well as a great couple.

Reuben taught an annual special topics course in boat building for several years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 2004 Tumblehome Boatworks moved to the Jones River Landing in Kingston, Massachusetts, into the famous old Shiverick Boatshop. There, Reuben founded Mass Bay Maritime Artisans and conducted a workshop and a boat building lecture series.

But the North Country was calling him back, and when in 2008 Hall's Boat Corporation on Lake George was looking for a manager for their newly expanded boatshop, it was an opportunity not to be missed. Reuben joined Hall's in 2008 and with Hall's had a terrific run of boatwork, with several fine restorations completed there, as well as a whole lot of boat repair and maintenance on the wooden boats on Lake George. The Boatshop expanded with three new boat builders as well, and became a restoration powerhouse. Cynde also joined the team, helping with marketing and PR, and the word got out about what was going on at Hall's Boat Corp.

In 2012, it was time to reestablish Tumblehome Boatshop in a new, dream scenario. In a 6,000 square foot building, Reuben built a new boatshop grounded in a heritage of solid craftsmanship, and a commitment to service and excellence.

**Workshops and Podcasts**

On one Saturday morning each month (usually the second Saturday) we open the boatshop doors for some good old fashioned shop talk. A believer in sharing information and learning by observing, reading, and doing, Reuben Smith's teaching style demands you think about what you're doing and approach the pursuit with intelligence and thoughtfulness. A partial listing of the workshops Reuben has conducted includes:

Boat Building Tricks of the Trade
Lines Plans and Special Skills
Building the Shellback Dinghy
Boat Building Skills Series
Building Half Hulls

During these informal events, Reuben will talk about each of the boats on the shop floor (currently there are 12). You'll learn about their history and the boatwork being done to them. Bring questions on your own boat, too, we're happy to share what we know. These events are free but registration is requested. Call Tumblehome Boatshop at (518) 623-5050 or email cynde@tumblehomeboats.com to register.

Other Adirondack programs are scheduled as follows:

ACBS Adirondack Chapter Spring Workshop , May 4, 9:30am at Reets Boatworks, Mayfield New York.

ACBS Adirondack Chapter Fall Workshop October 19, 10am at Tumblehome Boatshop, Warrensburg New York.

**Boat Show Appearances**

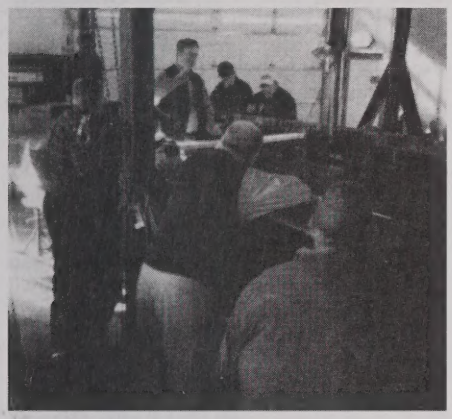
WoodenBoat Show, Mystic Seaport, Connecticut, June 28-30.

Antique Boat Show, Clayton New York, August 2-3.

Lake George, New York, Rendezvous , August 23-24 (TBD)

**Sound Inter Club Presentation**

A presentation and slide show by Reuben Smith on the restoration of two 1926 Sound Inter Club racing class sloops will be held on August 17 at 7pm at the Adirondack Folk School.



**February Saturday Shop Talk**

While those living in New England were digging out from the historic nor'easter "Nemo" on the second Saturday in February, Tumblehome Boatshop was hosting its first Saturday Shop Talk. About 20 people braved the Adirondack roads of northern New York to sip hot coffee and listen to boat shop owner Reuben Smith talk about the wooden boats on the shop floor.

Among these boats was *Gadfly*, a 33' mahogany planked sedan built by the Hutchinson Boat Works in Alexandria Bay, New York, in 1931. Hutchinson boats were built by skilled boat builders who crafted each boat individually, rather than in assembly line style factory production. These were boats built to handle the choppy water of the St Lawrence River and customized to customer specifications for fishing, commuting, and cruising.

*Gadfly* is owned today by the Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, New York, as part of their in-water fleet. Tumblehome was selected to restore the boat, in part, based on its commitment to offer programming and events related to the restoration process as well as its experience in historic restorations. Check our website as we'll be updating the gallery as the restoration progresses.

The February Shop Talk started with a discussion of the other boats on the floor (from 11' to 33', including two fully restored 1926 Sound Inter Club racing class sailboats in the shop for winter storage but also getting some minor tweaks (see *Messing About in Boats*, January, 2013 issue), a 1929 15' tender with an Austin Bantam motor, a 24' Marconi rigged catboat designed by Herreshoff draftsman Fred Goeller desperately in need of restoration but getting very little attention as it is Smith's own boat, a well preserved vintage HiLiner in for restoration, a vintage Old Town wood canvas canoe, a 1960s 16' Lyman getting its first restoration ever, a storied late 1800s fantail launch under restoration and eager to be back on Lake George with its new Elco electric motor and a 1942 22' lapstrake Hutchinson.

To talk about *Gadfly*, Reuben climbed into the boat while people gathered port and starboard. The house had been removed at this point and was being stored at the other end of the shop, resting safely over the 12' Goeller-designed row-sail-motor dinghy under construction (another of Smith's boats). The motor, seats and sole had also been removed from *Gadfly* at this point so onlookers were able to see the frames and planking from the inside out. Smith talked about how the boat was originally built, what sort of repairs had been made on her over the years and what the next steps were in order to replace the bottom.

Representatives from the Antique Boat Museum, including curator Emmett Smith, were unable to attend due to a simultaneous storm, but will be on hand next time to discuss the boat's history and its role at the museum. The boat will be re-launched at the Antique Boat Museum this summer.

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# Hey Hugh, About This Tug I Wanna Build

An Email Exchange of
Tugboat Design Concepts

**Hugh to Readers:**

My Background: First of all, I'm not a tug expert, not in the sense that I know how to operate one, design one and build or repair one. My interest in tugs was a retirement time filler that grew to devour me. I now write professionally about tugs from time to time and I was the editor-in-chief of *TugBitts*, the quarterly journal of the Tugboat Enthusiasts Society (60 pages per issue on coated stock with color photos!) and headed the Society for several years. And, as readers know, I also produce the monthly column "Beyond the Horizon" discussing what happened in the maritime world the month before. In short, I'm just another writer.

The genesis of this article was innocent enough. I had noticed in recent issues an increasing numbers of offbeat boat building reports from people named Dave Lucas, Dan Rogers, Mississippi Bob and others. The reports were usually about their projects but could include the work of others. In the March issue, Dan talked about his desire to build a small tug that could push a small shanty boat. He had made a start on a tug, named it *Shenanigan*, and planned to install what he called a Lucas Drive (Hi Dave!). Since Dan sounded like a man who might entertain 'most any idea, I impishly wrote the following letter to Editor Bob Hicks.

**Hugh to Bob:**

I have been enjoying Dan Rogers' free form ramblings about building a tugboat that somehow miraculously morphed into a "1910 Commuter Launch." I note that he plans to power it with a "Lucas Drive," an old outboard lower end stuck through the bottom of the 1910 Commuter Launch and topped with a Briggs and Stratton lawnmower engine. Elsewhere, Rogers bemoans the inability to move a boat sideways.

Some years ago, when I was building small boats with my sons, I seriously considered an installation very much like the "Lucas Drive." But Son #2 and I wanted to add a Kitchen Rudder to the boat. With it, he could approach a float, come to a stop and then sidle the boat sideways up snug against the float, all without a change in engine revs. That should impress the locals, no?

I won't detail what a Kitchen Rudder is because it's too much fun researching the subject on the 'net but I can assure Dan Rogers and others like him that building and installing a Kitchen Rudder is well within his capabilities! (*Look it up on Wikipedia—Ed*)

Hicks, of course, passed this letter on to Dan and I immediately heard from him.

**Dan to Hugh:**

Thanks, very much, Hugh. You're quite right. Off I went, dashing from Kitchens to azipods, to Korts, to Pleugers… all before a second cup of coffee this morning. It all adds to the reveries. I am at the moment trussed up in a cast that is somehow expected to make my accidentally shattered arm useable again, about the time green stubble replaces the current white mounds in the yard (*no more roller skating for another 40 years—Ed*). And I will then be faced with the eternal question, "continue to tinker, or put whatchagot in the water?"

I'd like to think that I can be content to put further (big) modifications off until more prosaic themes are addressed. Like, whether it's gonna tip over the first time everybody sits on one side. But I do have this bartered for

**Bob Hicks to Dan Rogers and Hugh Ware:**

Would you guys be interested in sharing your email exchanges about this tug dream project with our readers, maybe under a title such as, "Hey Hugh, About This Tug I Wanna Build"?

**Dan to Hugh and Bob:**

Sounds OK with me. A bit of an editing challenge, I suspect. What do you say, Hugh?

**Hugh to Dan, Bob and Readers:**

I'll take a whack at editing some of our messages. But first let me introduce the players. First, the uninhibited boat builder Dan Rogers, who lives in Diamond Lake, Washington,

Second, myself in an atypical pose taken at the atypical setting of wife Joan and I at our 50th Anniversary celebration somewhere on Cape Cod. ("I kinda fancy the resemblance to NASCAR race driver 'King' Richard Petty.") I normally reside in a large retirement community in Peabody, Massachusetts, not far from Bob Hicks in Wenham.

Briggs & Stratton out in the shop. And there's a near antique 50hp Evinrude V-4 hanging next to it with a really big, really flat, prop on it. And the boat in question IS right there, too. Drat you, Hugh! And, thank you Hugh!

Bob Hicks tells me you know a thing or two about a thing or two (to flaunt one of my several favorite Robb Whiteisms), and especially tugboats. But first things first. Thank you so much for your monthly look at murder, mayhem and business as usual on the world's oceans. OK, I admit that the first thing I look for in *MAIB* is whether Bob has put ink to one of my riffs. But immediately after that I flip to "Beyond the Horizon" and then back to check in with Matthew Goldman (I read his commentaries with a New England accent). Your signature economy of prose is such a marvelous gift to us all. And yet, your reports never fail to elicit those mental glimpses of steel bulkheads coated with oil-based paint, Marlboro smoke and Eau d'Dirty Socks. The throb of a pair of V-16s and screw beats thud up from someplace beneath my feet. And of course, the inevitable question, "How did I ever manage to live in those conditions? Those buckets were basically floating homeless shelters, with too many rules and not enough fire escapes." Thanks for taking me back, if only briefly, and then letting me return to my preferred version of Fiddler's Green.

I've had this fetish for a small tug looking boat ever since the day I saw one of Jay Benford's 14-footers on Lake Union in Seattle. Someplace in a box or on a bookshelf, I've got his little design offering book complete with a sample ferrocement mesh explaining how I could whomp up my own copy. I never screwed up either the courage, nor the resources and patience, to start a boat like that from scratch. Probably won't even now that it's more possible. However, the imperative remains.

I'm wondering if you could lead me to some profile pictures and/or drawings that sort of embody the "Little Toot" concept we all seem gravitate to. My current default method of "boat building" is to take an existing hull from somebody else's discard pile and then build something on that foundation. More and more lately, it's become a creative process where only the boat really knows what she'll look like in the final iteration. Granted, purpose built boats follow some important principles that are excluded when I take a hull that really was never produced to do this or that particular mission. Tugs especially.

Currently, I have to decide whether to "save" an otherwise unremarkable IO hull that I sort of inherited from a close friend's dad. A rational person would simply get the sawzall out and load the chunks into the dump run trailer. But I think I can give what's still left of the old girl a new career. It would be simple to make it a self propelled shanty barge. And perhaps that's what will happen with this one. But first I'm hoping to hit upon a profile that says "tugboat." Maybe you have what I'm looking for in your archives?

In your opinion, is putting the tow point of attachment ahead of the screw just useful, or essential? I don't visualize it making a conventionally steered outboard work like a prop and rudder, but am wondering if it does enough good to put up with the resulting obstacle course.

**Hugh to Dan:**

The general rule is that a tug works a ship off the tug end that is farthest from the means of propulsion. American tugs usually have the screw(s) at the rear end so use the push-pull system using a short line from the bow of the tug. And all azimuthing stern drive (ASD) tugs do ditto.

Elsewhere, especially where tugs, even when stern driven, must work ships in narrow quarters, (such as going through tidal gates into a water dock), they usually used a towing hook placed about amidships. The actual

point of towing can be controlled by what is variously called a gog, gob or bridle, a short line from the tug's after deck that loops around the towline and can be pulled in or let out as the skipper desires.

In your case, placing the tow point at or behind the screw will leave you unable to exert much control over the tow. At or ahead of the screw would let you maneuver under the towline.

But why tow? Much tug and barge work is done with the barge "on the hip" of the tug. That is, with the barge lashed to one side of the tug, preferably with the tug's prop behind the stern of the barge for max control And, ideally, the tug should be secured so it toes in a bit, maybe with its projected centerline intersecting the middle of the barge's bow.

But that's getting pretty esoteric!

**Dan to Hugh:**

Thanks a lot. I, for one, love the esoteric stuff. The problem immediately in front of me is this spring and fall dock moving exercise we do with a tin skiff, pushing the floppy, ragged edged units with my bow hooked under one end of erach dock. It's a constant vigilance thing, with a combination of spin on the tow and new vector to get new courses both to correct and to compensate for an erratic set and drift situation (lake wind conditions). And if I get into a headwind of more than 5 knots, it's pretty much game over.

The aluminum skiff can take the abuse that comes from a job like this. But if I could put one of the ubiquitous IO ski boats with a ski tow roll bar at mid ships on the job, the extra horsepower would offer a safety margin we don't otherwise enjoy. Such is my reason for using a tow hawser to avoid scratches or worse to somebody else's metal-flake Madonna. Mid course adjustments with an outboard without an independent rudder has been a lot less responsive with the tow on the hip. And I don't see, in my clouded noggin, how even a lot more horsepower would allow me to turn the head with much precision without a legitimate rudder.

So, that's the background for my question.

**Hugh to Dan:**

The professional way to keep control of a pushed barge (or float) is to use what are sometimes called push wires. The tug's nose is centered on the barge's stern and secured there with a line or two. Then a stout line is extended from each corner of the barge stern back to the tug's quarters, through some turning device like sheaves, and secure tightly to the towing bitt or whatever. Several ways of connecting tug and barge are shown in www.pelicanpassage.com/docs/SOP-Towing.doc. Great stuff! (BTW, do explore the www.pelicanpassage.com thoroughly. Capt Pat Falon has made a wonderful gift to the tugboating industry (and all other mariners) with what's on his site. His time lapse videos are wonderful and, by the way, Pat is a master at moving barges on a single line! And there's a lot of other good info. Also see trainweb.org/AbandonedLIRR/makingup2.pdf.

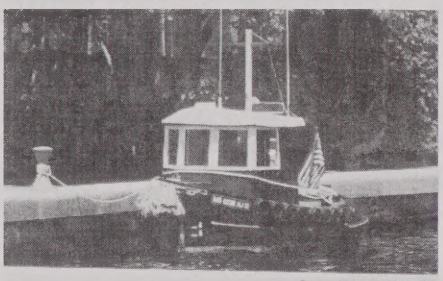
I've found a tug that may inspire you. It's the exquisitely scaled and detailed tug *Atlantic Hunter II*. (Both the scale used and the detail bits are well worth studying! Capt Ben Grudinskas has a master's eye and great attention to what's right.) And it was built on the hull of a 26' planing speedboat made by Trojan and can proceed at a tug-like sedate speed or suddenly roar off on a plane! Go to http://www.frayedknotarts.com/grudins kas.html to see it. (And do click on the reference to the Waterford Tugboat Roundup to see it and bigger and even smaller tugs in action) And http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyCoh7UlPU8. Also, http://forum.wooden.com/showthread.hp?137409-indecision-mini-tug-plans. Do a Google search using his name and the tug's name.)

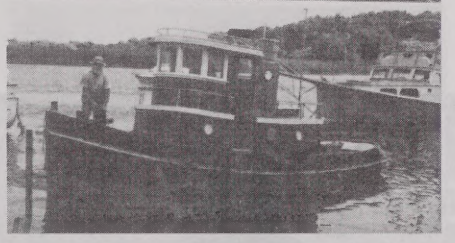
**A Bold Conversion**

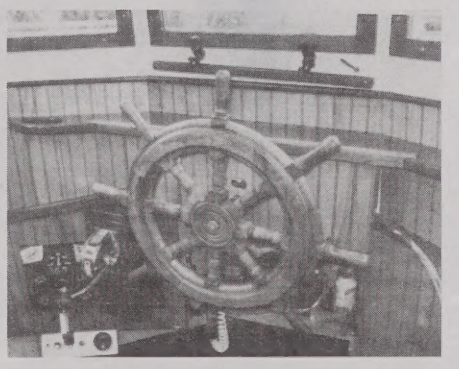
(From *Tug Bitts*, 2009)

TES member Ben Grudinskus is a former policeman and master woodworking craftsman who is deeply involved with the rehabilitation of the National Historic Landmark tugboat *Luna* of Boston, Massachusetts.

Some years ago he built a 15' tug of the Berkley tug yacht design and jauntily chugged into Boston Harbor on a Saturday. Sailing towards the *Luna* lying at the Commonwealth Pier, he was welcomed alongside and the rest is history, he was shanghaied by the volunteers and the *Luna* Project.







However Ben had bigger non *Luna* plans. He acquired a 26' fiberglass planing speedboat made by Trojan and boldly converted it into a tug! Ben studied lots of tug photos to create a tiny but authentic looking profile. The results are dramatic.

Note the convenient handrails, cleverly scaled to look like deck railings and the welded fore and aft H-bitts. The *Atlantic Hunter II*, seen here on its pre-completion sea trial on the sylvan tidal Neponset River just south of Boston Harbor performed wonderfully. It can chug at displacement speeds or plane at higher speeds. Now Ben is finishing all the internal touches, tweaking his power plant, adjusting the rudder to maximize control and adding additional tuggy bits to this trailerable wonder tug. Congratulations Ben!

**Dan to Hugh:**

With the real possibility of substituting cute for useful, Sweet Sixteen is what I picture pulling my small shanty barge "north into the rain" with. Probably more than a single winter's project. Maybe not. The blue hull becomes the foundation for the "bunkhouse" shanty, which I can build in a couple months. Hmnnn, "Single up!...take in all lines!"

**Hugh to Dan:**

Cute. It looks like a Hankinson Sorensen Sweet 16. But may I make a few comments? What's its length? I find it hard to figure the scale of what I see. The hull is probably burdensome and may need much ballast. Fuel, potable water and blackwater tanks go where? Is the floor of the w'house at main deck level or is it a step down? Some bitts or cleats are needed fore and aft.

Based on my experience of spending hours taking the 33' tug *Harbor Hobo* between Massachusetts and Rhode Island ports, a wheelhouse is much nicer if it has seats for helmsman and a guest or two.

I do not understand how a double berth can occupy the same space as the engine.

A barely legible note to the left of the wheel seems to hint that the double berth extends forward and under the w'house floor?

Re your hull. Funnily enough, it could be made into a tug like *Atlantic Hunter II*. The flared bow is a problem that suggests two solutions:

Tell everyone it is a Japanese tug and they all have flared bows.

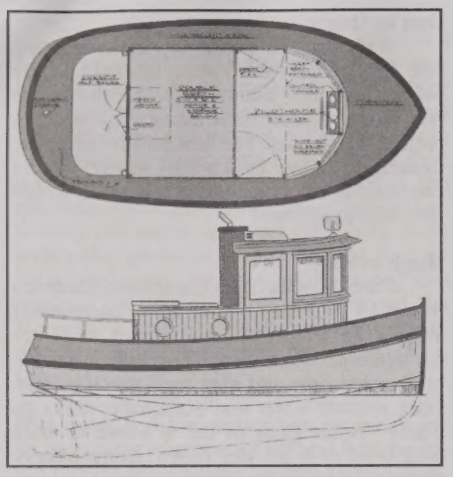
Or build a false bow on the hull, styrofoam and a FG skin. Needn't be too strong coz your speed will be slow, won't it? And the finish can be rough because you're going to cover it with the big bow fender you're going to knit, aren't you?

**Dan to Hugh:**

The Hankinson drawing for pilothouse proportions, The Glen-L BoJest bulwark profile to (hopefully) disguise the donor hull's flair up forward and the framing method now employed on *Shenanigan* and a couple other mini shanty experiments from last spring to allow for ad lib shaping of cambers and tapers. I hope that concept sets alright with you. It would be a privilege for me.

**Hugh to Readers:**

And here I must leave Dan while I get back to attacking a backlog of deferred writing, including two eulogies, about seven book reviews, some more histories of Canadian war built tugs and next month's column. Plus, of course, preparing those annual income tax reports! But it's been fun, Dan and Bob. Just don't do it to me again!



Sweet 16

Glen L BoJest

**Dan to Hugh:**

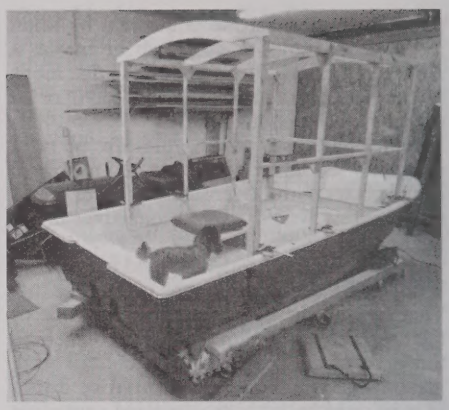
Final message from Diamond, Washington, where it's just above freezing, the sun is out and I've got our road snowplowed down to dirt. Let the mud season begin! Launching day can't be too far behind. Thanks, Hugh there's more than a few lessons here.

Maybe it's like this TV show that my wife watches, where brides-to-be take mom and her checkbook and about 75 of their closest friends to this swanky dress shop. They ooh and emote about lace and bodices for about an hour every night. That expensive dress seems to get waaay more attention than what it's gonna take to stay married to that clueless Ken Doll.

Anyhow, I'm figuring out that a proper immersion in the world of tugboats takes a great deal more than a brief flirtation with the "bridal gown" trappings of cabin profiles and trailboards. There's a lot of homework I've gotta' do still, to do this project justice. Thanks for pointing me in several helpful directions!

**Tally Hooooooooo.....**

This profile, with this sheerline (left). With this building method, on this hull (right). Maybe.



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# The Keewaydin "Cronje" Canoe Project Continues

Story & Photos by Steve Lapey
stevelapey@comcast.net
Reprinted from the Norumbega Chapter
WCHA Newsletter

The Keewaydin Cronje project is back on track. After the canvas was filled in November, the hull went into storage until January 5 when it came back to the shop for more attention from our Norumbega volunteers.

On Saturday, January 5, 2013, Tom Bickford, Jeff Morrill, Jeff North, Ernie Osborn, Bob Wisniewski and Paul Shirley all joined in for a short session where we milled out the new outwales from a long blank of spruce and with the leftover time we went over the filler with sandpaper to get it ready for primer and paint. Jeff North brought some good Keewaydin advice, he was a counselor there for a few years and has some good canoe tripping stories to tell.

Tom Bickford, Jeff North, Ernie Osborn and Jeff Morrill taking a break from canoe work. If nothing else we created a lot of sawdust milling the outwales.

In the ensuing week the hull received two coats of Interlux Pre-Kote primer. The first coat was lightly dry sanded and the second coat was wet sanded to give us a half way decent surface for the Hunter Green enamel which was applied by week's end.

On Saturday, January 19, a good sized group of Norumbega members arrived to trim the canvas along the sheer line and install the new outwales. Gary Amirault, Tom Bickford, Bill Clements, John Fiske, John Fitzgerald, Ted Harrigan, Jeff Morrill and Paul Shirley were joined by guests Henry and Mat Cox from Concord, Massachusetts. Henry and Mat have Jerry Stelmok's book, *Building the Maine Guide Canoe*, and they are interested in building a wood canvas canoe in the near future. Living close to Fitz they are sure to be able to get any help they need on a canoe project.

Mat Cox, John Fitzgerald, John Fiske, Gary Amirault, Paul Shirley and Henry Cox along with a lot of clamps are getting the outwales in place.

Fortunately, there was plenty of coffee and donuts available to fuel the workers as we measured, clamped, drilled and screwed to get the outwales in place. After everything was screwed down the belt sander was used to even off the rib ends and get the rails ready for varnish.

Rails on and sanded, waiting for the next shop session.

At our next session on March 9 we will fit and install the new seats and thwarts and put the stem bands on. By that time the end will be in sight, a little touch up sanding and a lot of varnishing, the final coats of paint and this project will be ready for the Assembly.

Roger MacGregor of the Ivy Lea Shirt Company has generously donated the new Chestnut deck decal and the hull stickers that will add a finishing touch to the canoe. Derek Rice has donated a pair of original Chestnut paddles to go with the canoe. Greg Nolan has finished the work on the new seats and has dropped them off, he has done a terrific job on them.

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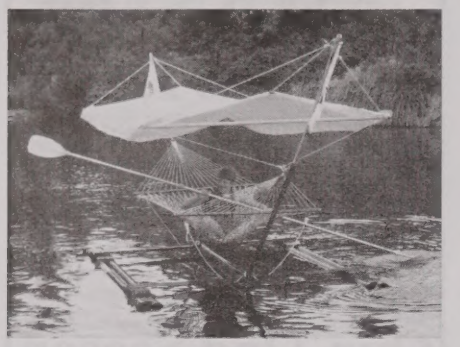
From the Tiki Hut

By Dave Lucas

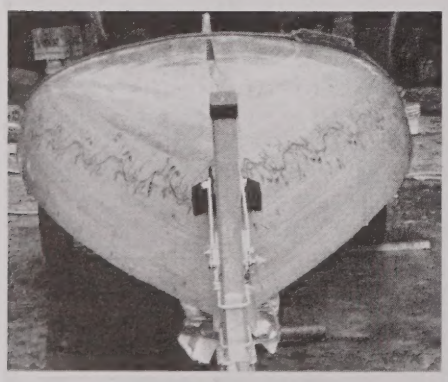
# Winter at the Tiki Hut

**January 3**
**Hamacat, Foldaboat, Super Slick Hulls**



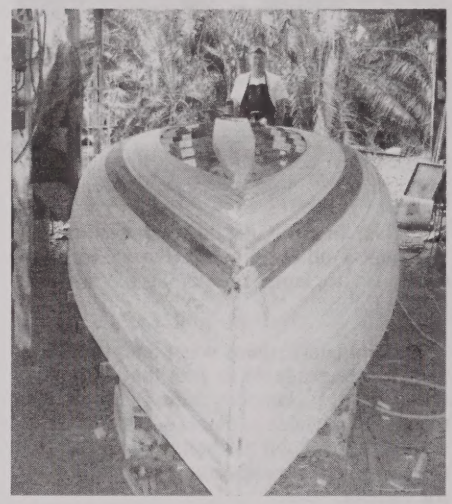
We have someone in mind for this hamacat boat. One girl in particular comes out a lot, says hi and jumps into a hammock, not to be seen for a couple of hours. This boat should be perfect for Barbara. The paddles are right out though.

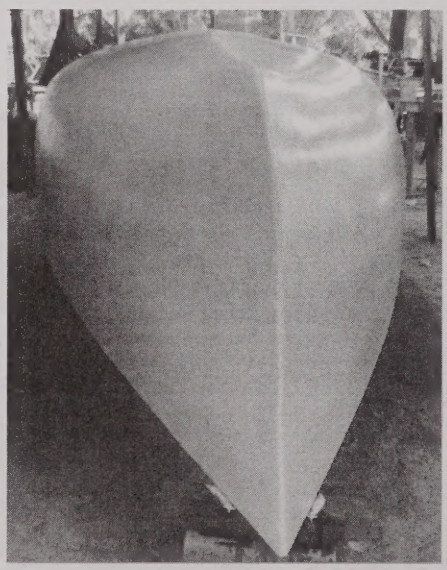
Another strange boat showed up yesterday. Here we were sitting around drinking some Two Buck Chuck wine and what should appear off the dock but three men in a tub, or in this case two men and a girl in a Foldaboat. And they had a six pack so they must be friends even though we'd never seen them before. It's Ann and her two brothers and they were welcomed into the fold like long lost kin.



This bright hull is Cortez melonseed #9, see what a fine job Roger Allen did getting a perfect shape on this design. Take this same hull and blow it up exactly 25% in all directions and here it is in these next two pictures. This is where my hull came from. Howard did just that and built his Tricia Marie. I used his molds, added 16" to the sides and stuck a 4' fantail on the back.

This super slick hull is causing an unexpected problem, it won't go slow. When I push the throttle out of neutral to the idle indent the motor is barely running, too quiet to hear but she's doing 3 knots. Push it up a tiny bit more and she hits hull speed of about





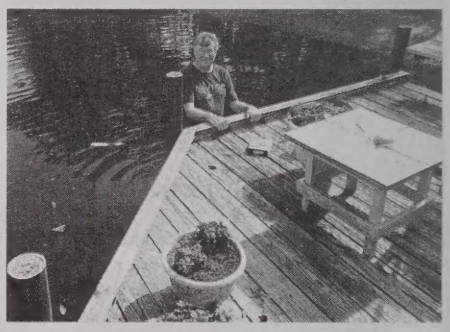
6 knots. So what's the problem, you ask? I don't have a rudder because this is a motorboat and the engine steers a motorboat.

OK, so think about coming alongside a dock. I can't steer with the motor because I can't slow down and with the water ballast this 4,000lbs is going to smash something and backing down isn't a really effective trick for swinging the stern in and stopping. Put it in neutral and I lose all steering. I did just that and as soon as I hit neutral and all steering stopped these thoughts flashed to mind.

I was telling this to the guys today and they looked stumped 'til the reality of what I was saying sank in. I'll just have to practice a lot or get a speed brake or glue a big ol' board to the motor. OR fit a bow thruster, don't have one of those yet. This thing's sort of like a jet ski, I have to give it the gas to turn.

**January 15**
**Rocket Ship, Dock, Red's Little Sailboat *Tom Hand***

Barry Long is famous for building two beautiful 13' melonseeds but needed a new challenge so he came down and got this Gannett hull from Crazy Steve. Don't you love this front-on shot of Barry in the boat? It shows the flared sides and wide planing hull of this rocket ship. The only similarity between the two boats is that they both go in the water. I wonder how easy this one is to dry out after you flip it?



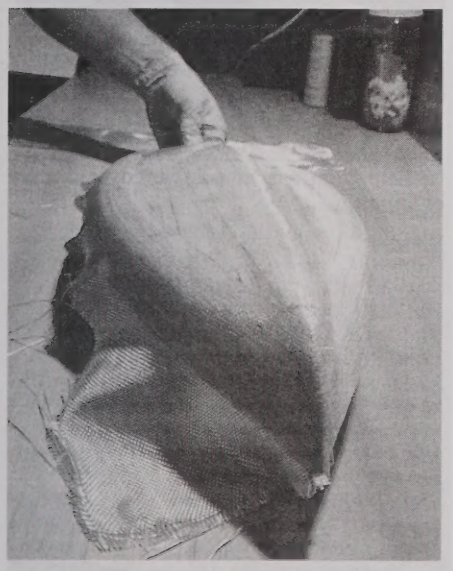
My dock needed some repair work and a small expansion so I added a triangle to the end. We're having super low tides right now so it was pretty easy to do and a pleasure to work in the water to get out of the record heat we're having; can you imagine 87° in January? I didn't even have to try very hard to get Steve to help me.

Howard needed a challenge so he decided to rebuild Red's little sailboat. You can see that there wasn't much to save and he had no plans to work with but he got right on it and is coming along fine. This is by far the hardest hull to build any of us have ever seen. It's only about 9' long but is real fat and has eight strakes on a side that have to all bend and come together at the ends. They're about 5" wide in the middle but only 1" at the bow. Even Howard is using some bad words and he never does that.

**January 19**
**Catamaboat Thing, Foam is Fun, Melonseed Model, Hardwood Pile,**
***Tom Hand***

Back by popular demand is the catamaboat thing. Turns out that it's tied up about half a mile down the river from me. Pete the plumber took a kayak down and got some pictures, no other info. I'll go talk to the guy one of these days to see what's what.

Along those same lines is this foam boat that Museum John's building here at the nut shop. I have to admit that I gave him a lot of encouragement and offered to sponsor him in this endeavor to build a world class ocean racer from a hundred years ago. I'll tell you more as things progress. The foam is just the mold and won't stay in the boat. It sure is fun to work with foam, took him about four hours to create this hull.



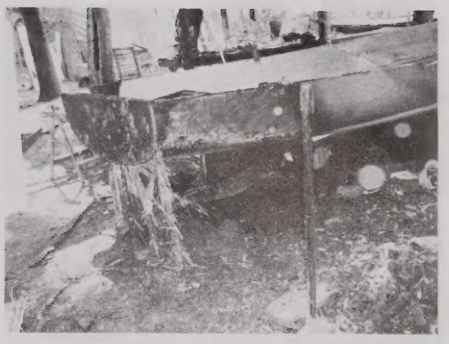
Kevin continues to work on his melonseed model, he's even glassing the little hull just like he will the real thing. When he does build the actual boat he'll discover that it's easier than the model was.

Steve gave Woodworker Paul a bunch of hardwood from his pile and this is what he turned it into in about a week. How is it that some guys are so good at this stuff? Anytime I stick two pieces of wood together I end having to use filler to cover the gap I left.

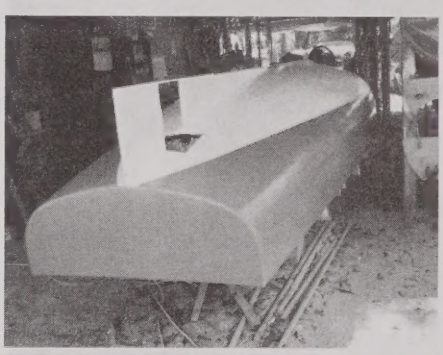
Howard is another one who can do magic with wood but this little boat of Red's is giving him a challenge. *Tom Hand* is turning out to be just as big a pain as I knew it would be. After fighting to get a strake on Howard sat back and said, "this thing is a lot harder than I thought it would be". We love the shape of the little hull.

**January 24**
**Final Construction Details of *Helen Marie***

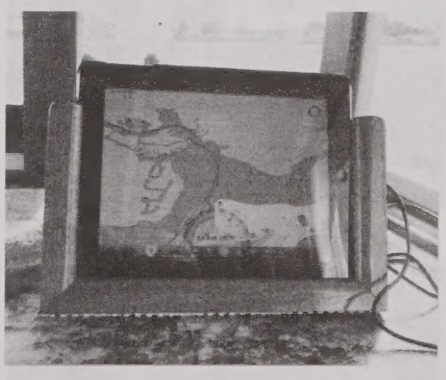
While I'm sitting here waiting for it to warm up a little I'll send the final construction pictures of the *Helen Marie*. She's just about done so I'll need to start with my next project soon, whatever that may be. I started building this boat on January 1, 2010, to make a cabin sailboat. I added 8" on to the sides of Howard's *Tricia Marie* and put in a well for an outboard motor. We've always had sailboats so what else would I build? The hull was glassed inside and out with the skeg and motor well in only four months and ready to get the decks and cabin started when the shop burned down. I looked out at 3am when I was awakened by the sounds of gunshots to see flames shooting up 200' from the boat shop. The sound I heard was really spray paint cans exploding. The fire department got here in time to save the front half of this boat, the rest of the shop was totally gone along with all of the tools and supplies, but what the hell. Us old guys just pitched in and built a new and better shop. It was a short circuit in an old radio that caused the fire.



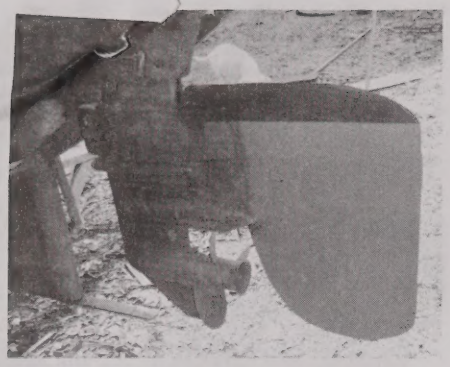
The guys said to just junk the burnt hull and start over but I'm stubborn and pressure washed and sanded the burned hull. I also thought long and hard about what I liked and didn't like about sailboats. I decided that what I needed was a fantail launch with full power and windows and a/c and everything, will go when I want to go, be comfortable all the time and not make me wet and cold. This hull that Roger Allen designed is so slick that it'll go with no power at all and ride as smooth as your Lexus.



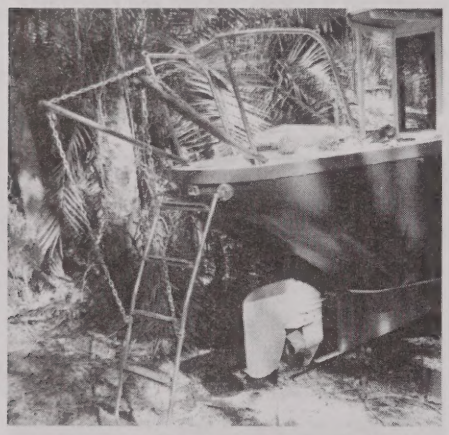
*Helen Marie* has exceeded my wildest dreams. I designed in all of the things that I like in boats and managed a home run. She does her hull speed of 7mph at just above idle speed setting, rides the waves like a cork, with the rudder addition turns on a dime and is fantastic looking. She's comfortable and easy to be in, I think she may be the perfect boat. She's 24' long and only 6½' wide so I can see behind her on the trailer. You should see the 90gal water ballast tank empting out the bottom when she's pulled, it's like a 2" fire hose blasting down on the ramp.



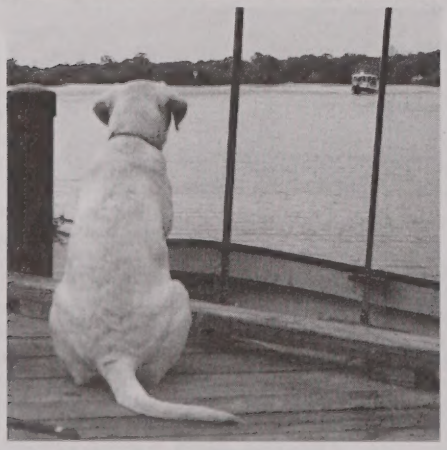
Instead of a high priced GPS unit with nautical charts I decided to use an iPad. It has a big bright screen and there are a bunch of nautical chart apps available. The one I like best is the new Jeppesen chart. These are the people who make the best aeronautical charts and this one is great and the app only costs $30. It's a stand alone program that will get you anywhere without internet connection.



Here's the rudder that I made for the outboard. I couldn't turn with just the motor so I molded one to the motor so it fits like a glove. Fiberglass and carbon fiber make a really strong rudder.



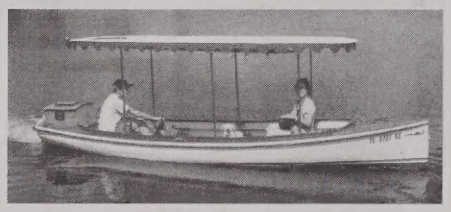
Also here is a picture of the boarding ladder. We've all had the experience of trying to get back on the boat and having to fight for our lives, the ladder goes under the boat, you have to do one leg knee bends or you need a crane to haul you out. After months of thought this is what I came up with and it works perfectly. This is even easier than using the step ladder.



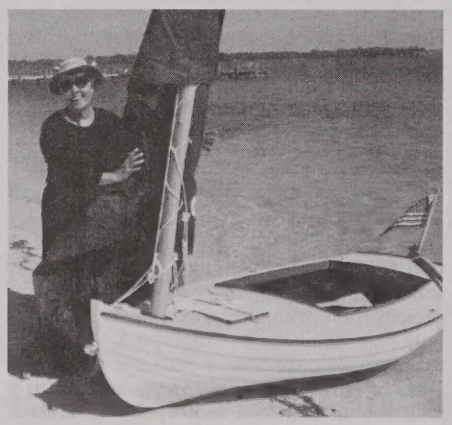
February 23

**Artist, Chelsea, Judy Blue Eyes, Sprit Rigs, Marsh Hen, Mystery Mold, New Top, Projects Progress**

World famous marine artist Robert Semler stopped by the shop last week to look around and show Steve the original of a picture he painted several years ago of boats in the last Small Craft Festival held at Cortez, FlL. Steve showed him the actual boat. We treated Bob with the same awe and respect that all of our guests receive, we told him to bring a six pack the next time he came around. You know he's one of us cause his answer was something like "it'll be better than that horse piss you guys are drinking". I may be a little fuzzy on his exact words.



He took this great picture of Steve and Lenna in Chelsea.

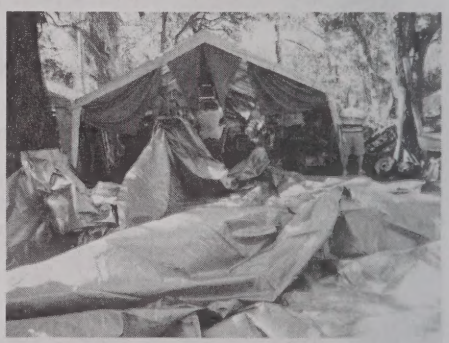


Judy Blue Eyes from Charleston stayed here for a few days to try out her new 13' melonseed. We took her boat, my *Laylah* and Museum John in Jim's melon out to the beach and had a memorable day. I broke my mast, John turned over with Helen in the boat and I discovered why sprit rigged boats are total crap. They should be outlawed and put in the same category as jet skis. I offered to convert Judy's boat to a gaff rig then it'll be a good little boat.

Before all you snotter fans give me a ration think of this scenario; going to lunch at a little waterfront place that's directly downwind on a high seawall with lots of fishing boats and docks sticking out all over. It's a 20knot wind directly into this mess, we have to fly in, tie up and drop sail while bouncing around off a dock. Eat a good lunch, get back on the boat, raise sail and beat away from the boats, docks and rocks. All in a little 13' boat that will turn over if we go up on the bow.

Michael B sold his Marsh Hen to this happy family. I hope he has a plan B for a boat because this thing is a really good boat. It is a little large for an old guy, maybe it's time for Mike to get one of these little melons.

John and I are pushing the mold for the mystery boat out back. This was the mold for Hugh Horton's 14' Buffle Head sailing canoe that we stretched to 19', widened to 50" and pulled up the sides a bit. It's a big dugout so far.

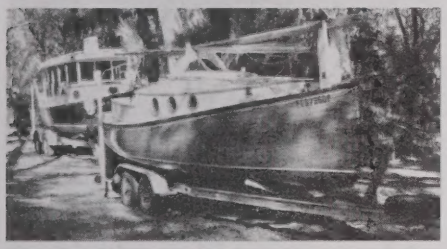


We needed a new top for some of the sheds and had this huge tarp. With a little help from our friends we covered a lot of things.

Sandy's almost done with his latest canoe.

Stan refinished his Bardarka.

Steve's new yard and boat lift are finished and look good.



Finally, two old looking boats look good out in the yard.

## Interlude…

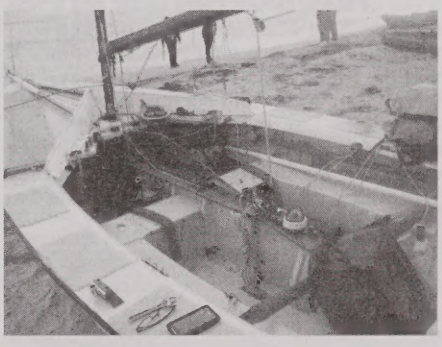
### Off to See the Start of the Everglades Challenge

Here's the first shots of the beach with the Everglades Challenge boats all lined up for the start tomorrow morning. The weather is perfect for a fast and comfortable 300 miles this time. The wind is out of the northwest which is perfect to get to Key Largo in four or five days or one or two days in the fast cats.

Meade Gougeon put outriggers on his WoodWind this year, I sure hope he finishes this time. Most of the boats are "normal" but a few seem to fall outside anyone's definition of the word when you're talking about a 300-mile expedition style race. The canoes and kayaks always make it but how about some of the tiny sailboats? How much crap can you stuff in a 10' boat anyway?

Chuck the Duck from Duckworks is in this year's race; believe it or not, his is a boat that will probably make it. Chuck stopped by the Tiki Hut and I took him for a ride on a real boat, *Helen Marie*.

I talked to the guy with that Nutshell pram looking boat. I said that I couldn't believe anyone would go in a 7' nutshell and he said it wasn't 7' it's 8' long.



I was at the Ringling Bridge in Sarasota to see the Everglades Challenge coming through. It was dead calm at 11:30am when a line of black clouds came along and it was blowing 20 at 11:31am. I've never seen anything like this. It wasn't a thunderstorm, it was the front coming through. The kayakers were ahead in the calm but the sailboats were catching up fast. It was blowing the tops off the white caps on the north side of the bridge and calmer but still howling on the south side. Everyone was surfing whether they wanted to or not.

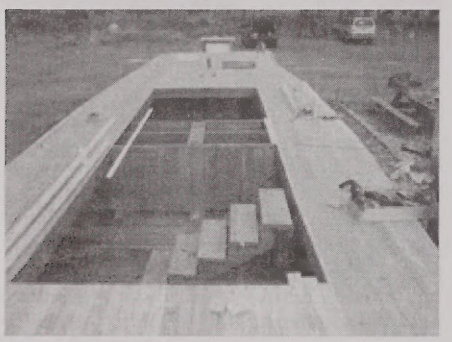
Jarhead Bill Fite in his black Sea Pearl was the first sailboat through on this inside route, I'm sure the hotrodder's were flying on the outside. He was on the far side but looked like he was out for a Sunday sail. The kayaks had to really work to surf and not end up on their sides. Chuck the Duck came through in the blue and orange boat, going like hell with only one sail up. I didn't see Meade, *Yellow Thing*, hope he's hanging in there.

Glen Hayes was also there and got these good shots.

http://wp.me/p2XBCQ-3h

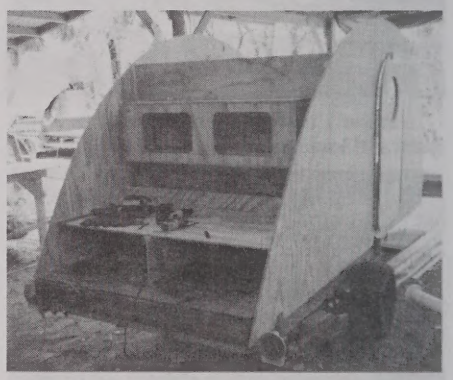
March 5

**Crystal River Rats, Mississippi Bob, Kayak Dock, Selling *Sweet Pea*, Teardrop Trailer, *Tom Hand***



The Crystal River Rats are building a huge sailing scow using only 1860's tools and methods but getting any information from them is like pulling teeth, all the builders must be sworn to secrecy not to tell. Here's a picture smuggled out to show the boat. Come on guys, give a little.

Steve's building a kayak dock so the rest of us can get out of our kayaks without falling into the water, sure hope it works because there's no way I can get out of one unless it's on the beach.

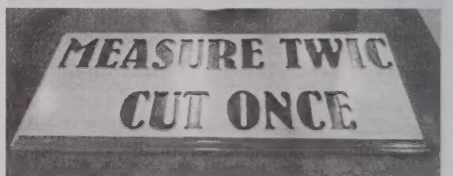


Instead of making another boat, Howard's making his son a teardrop trailer. Something different to watch.

From time to time you'll see "In My Shop" by Mississippi Bob in *Messing About in Boats*. Here's what he looks like in real life. I think he used to be a Mississippi Lock Master but now he just plays with building little boats. Sound familiar?

Howard is getting a lot of grief from his wife about getting rid of some of his boats, so he took *Sweet Pea* down to a consignment shop in Sarasota and told them to sell it for what they could get. He's willing to take $10k or even less for the best Fenwick Williams 18 catboat ever. The new aluminum tandem trailer, two-cylinder Yanmar and new sail are worth more than that.

Tim Norwood has a mold and is making some rowing shells. Sarasota has a new world class lake to race on.

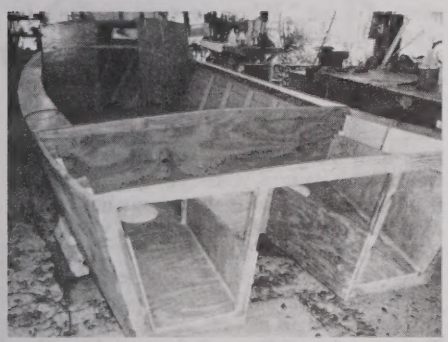



We all need to put up this sign, I sure do.

**March 13**
**Fast/Safe/Comfortable, Judy Blue Eyes, Spending Big Bucks, Skin on Frame, Red's Sailing, Polkadot Canoe, Teardrop Trailer, Shop Sign**

This long white skinny boat is one that Museum John and I are building for races like the EC. Our goal is to make a fast, safe, comfortable decked sailing canoe that will crash through any weather at high speed. John is the designer, I'm just the glass grunt.

Here's a little of what I'm doing to Judy Blue Eyes brand new little melonseed. After a sail I found a lot of things I didn't like so I told her to leave it with me and I'd fix it. Don't panic Judy, it'll come back together. She thought I was kidding when I told her that her new centerboard was shocking pink, what do you think? The only time you can see it is when you're turned over and then you'll be glad its shocking. We were kidding with each other today at how easy it is to get us to do something if it sparks our interest and how impossible it is if it doesn't. I made Judy a new gaff today from part of a cedar tree that I planted thirty years ago.

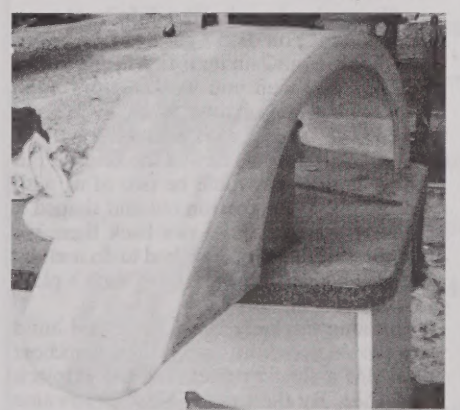


Jim is going to fool around and have to buy a motor for his boat if doesn't watch out. There comes a time when you have to bite the bullet and spend the big bucks all at one time, kind of like when you have to go buy all of the hardware to rig your new sailboat. If you haven't bought any new stuff lately get ready for a sticker shock.

Pete the Plumber wanted to try building a skin on frame canoe so we said heck yes come on out so we can see. Here he is with his dad and Museum John figuring out how it goes together. Pete's another one who likes to make it up as he goes along.

The little *Tom Hand* is finished and looks great. Red loves it and is ready to start sailing again, at the age of way old. He tells us stories about working on the Grand Coulee dam in 1938 before he went off to war in the merchant marine.

Sandy's finishing up another canoe, this one with a polkadot trim strip. We tried to launch his tugboat from the beach here and failed but it was a lot of fun messing with it.



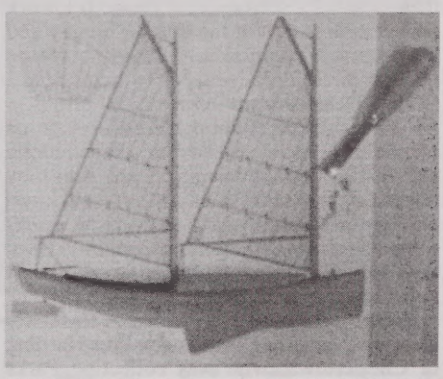
Howard's teardrop trailer is coming along. He designed some matching fenders, they look like a '32 Ford's don't they. He roughed them out and I glassed the hell out of them. There's no accounting for what's fun to some of us.

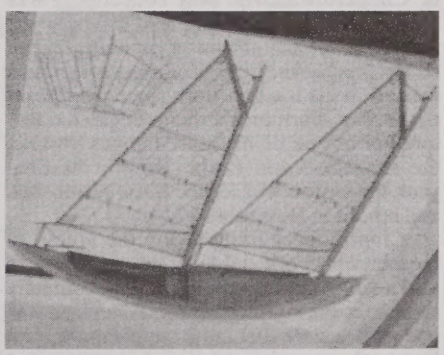
# Commodore Munroe's Egret

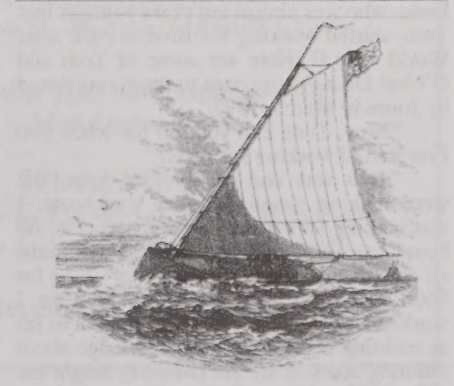
By Irwin Schuster

My latest project is a half model of Commodore Munroe's Egret. The hull is made with a separate lower part to solve that perennial problem of waterline painting. Not a traditional basic half, this model will be detailed with spars and sails, and encased in a shadow box. It is 1/24, poplar with cherry cabin sides and coaming. The fore and aft stems are some unknown hardwood, carried along the keel and interrupted to accommodate the centerboard.

Black and white photos of the boat do not indicate hoops and seem to show a dark hull, so I have painted it black with red bottom. The cherry parts will be varnished, although I suspect they would not have been, much after launching, for reasons of upkeep in the south Florida weather. The curved coaming and cabin side was accomplished with a heated planking iron into a radiused "die" Forming these parts allow gluing without the stresses of springback, same with the half and quarter round moldings that trim the cabin. They were made by rounding flat sheet and cutting off on a PREAC saw. The deck and cabin top are "canvassed" with fine linen and painted buff.







# Voices from the Past

## Stories from Bronza Parks' Boatyard

By Dick Cooper
Photos Courtesy of Mary Parks Harding and Trudi Jones
Reprinted from *The Chesapeake Log*
A Publication of the
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum
cbmm.org

Two decades ago, Trudi Jones of Cambridge, Maryland, was a young mother looking for insights into family legends surrounding the life and times of her famous boat building grandfather, Bronza Parks. She was just three years old in 1958 when Parks was shot to death in his Wingate, Dorchester County, boatshop by a deranged customer during a dispute over a bill. Jones has no memory of her grandfather but grew up listening to her mother, grandmother and family friends tell stories about the big man with the rough hands who left an indelible mark on the history of Chesapeake Bay watercraft.

"I don't know why I needed to know more about him, but I felt moved to do so," Jones recalls. "I am a spiritual person and a Christian and I just felt moved by God to do this."

So, in 1992, armed with little more than her drive to learn more, along with her children's plastic Fisher Price tape recorder, she tracked down two of Bronza's protégées, who were by then getting on in years themselves. She started her project by calling the family friends whom she had known most of her life, Tom Dean and F. O'Neal Dean.

"I told them at the time that I was thinking about writing something and I wanted to make sure it was accurate." Tom, who passed away in 2001 at the age of 83, and O'Neal, who was 78 when he died in 2006, were both from Wingate but not related. Each of them spent more than an hour in separate telephone interviews with Jones. They recalled their first jobs working for Parks, his work ethic, his demand for the highest quality and his occasional light side. ("Bronzy could be quite comical once you got to know him," O'Neal Dean is heard saying.)

They talked about the hard work in an era before electricity and the camaraderie of life in a small tidewater town. And they talked about the life skills and personal kindness Bronza Parks imparted to them. Looking back, Jones says what she learned from the men seemed to satisfy her quest. "I just never felt moved to pursue it further."

She gave copies of the tapes to family members, including her cousin, Pres Harding of Chestertown, who was collecting Parks family memorabilia. And that's where the tapes sat. But like other aspects of the legend of Bronza Parks, there has been a renewed interest in his life and work since the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum began the restoration of one of his most famous vessels, the skipjack *Rosie Parks*. Now in its final year, the project will see the *Rosie* relaunched and reborn in November 2013.

Jones' tapes bring to life the voices of the men who worked side by side with Bronza Parks from the 1930s start of his company right up to his untimely death. Tom Dean was one of Bronza's first crew members. O'Neal Dean, who was almost ten years younger that Tom, started working for Bronza right after World War II. Here are some of Tom and O'Neal Deans' responses to questions posed by Jones in March, 1992:

"Now, Tom, can you tell me when you first started working for Papa?"

"That was one of my first jobs. We were making gasoline boats, workboats. I was making $6 a week. We were workin' 60 hours a week and we were selling workboats, all completed with motors and everything for $600 ready for the man to go crabbin' in. I worked with my father on the water but as far as building boats, I had no knowledge about building boats at all. He (Bronza) taught me to do good work and I always prided myself in the work that he taught me to do."

Jones asks a similar question of O'Neal Dean who says, "I had just come out of the Navy and the first job I got I worked for a guy there in Cambridge and we had to ride the buses back then and I thought why can't I find a job here locally so went down and asked him if he had any work. He says, 'Well, what can you do?' And I said, 'Just about nothing.' He says, 'Well, you're just the man I'm lookin' for. Cuz I tell ya just about everybody I hire, if they's done carpenter work, they want to do it the way they want to. This way, I get someone like you says you don't know anything about it, then you'll learn my way and that'll be the way I want it done.' So that's the way it started, right there."

Both Tom and O'Neal Dean talked at length about the long hours and hard physical work, but they did so with a sense of pride and accomplishment. As Tom Dean put it, "You either did the work or someone else would." Tom Dean's experiences, however, started in the days long before South Dorchester County received electricity. In one exchange he talks about boat building in the early 1930s.

"It was hard work. You didn't get a ten minute break. You didn't get a smoke break. You worked from 7am until 11:30am and you had lunch and then you worked from noon to 5pm. That was a time when everybody worked. The hardest work was when we got a whole log in and we hewed the keelson out with an axe. There would be two of us with axes and chop that keelson out and shaped it up. There was no Skil Saws back then, we didn't have electricity. You had to do it all by hand. We had to saw everything with a plain old handsaw."

Among the early boats he helped build were the *Martha*, the dove-tailed workboat in CBMM's floating fleet, and the skipjack *Wilma Lee*. By the time O'Neal Dean came to work at the Wingate boatyard, Bronza Parks had established a reputation for not only being a workboat craftsman, but also for building fine yachts for the more distinguished gentleman sailor and sportsman. To build finer vessels required more exotic woods than the Eastern Shore forests could provide. O'Neal recalls one trip to Baltimore to find wood that could hold a shine. He starts to tell the story about a trip but his telling is interrupted by a chuckle.

"It was kind of funny. Bronza was comical, once you got to know him. He'd have his spurts, he could fly hot on somethin' right quick, but he was the other way, too. We went to get some lumber and Bronzy told him we was looking for some good mahogany." Dean says the salesman showed them wood that "wasn't very wide and wasn't very long and it wasn't very pretty."

"Bronzy says, 'My gosh, Captain, ain't you got no better mahogany than this here?'

The salesman says, 'Don't that suit ya?'

Bronzy replies, 'I'll tell ya, when I was down in the Philippines, this is the kind of stuff we used to build our damn hog pens out of.' Well I got snickerin' and had to turn around because I didn't want the man to see me laughing." (All his friends knew Bronza had never been to the Philippines.) They were escorted to another shed where they found mahogany planks 24" to 28" wide and 24' to 26' long.

"We loaded that truck up that day and bring 'em back. Prettiest stuff you ever laid your eyes on. Bronzy says, 'See, if you don't know how to speak out for yourself, you know he'd a made me take that other stuff.' That was pretty stuff, we used it for a couple of years."

Trudi Jones asks O'Neal if there was anything that set Bronza Parks' boat apart from the others being built at the time. "He always emphasized keen lines. He was just a good sharp boat builder. He had a good eye. If you ever done something wrong don't ever think he wouldn't see it." He goes on to tell about one worker who didn't finish the woodwork in a cockpit just right. I told this guy, "You know you got some kinks in there and I don't think Bronza's going to like that."

He says, "They don't look all that bad to me." That evening I stayed later. So (Bronza) come home from Cambridge and climbed up inside.

He says, "You wouldn't have a hatchet in that tool box would ya?"

I said, "Ya, I got one." Well, he went up in there and I hear all this choppin'. He cut every bit out of there that that guy was all day long puttin' in there. He cut every daggone piece of it right out. He says, "I don't understand it. Some people can't see right. He knew I wouldn't like it and I tore every piece of it out." When we were working, he always liked to get the boats looking better and styled better and have the fair lines. Fare lines means there aren't any little bumps. Fare lines means they are pleasant to the eye. Fare lines is not spelled f-a-i-r, it is spelled f-a-r-e. It all paid off because when a boat went out it caught your eye, like a car that is all shined up that makes you want to turn around and take that second look, you know, sort of like a pretty woman."

Tom and O'Neal Dean were more than just master boat builders, they were accomplished musicians as well. Along with Charlie Parks, another of Bronza's best workers, they made up the Wingate Ramblers, a traveling band that played all around Dorchester County and even went on the radio in Annapolis.

"We were advertising for him, playing music," O'Neal Dean says. "It had to be about '49 because Tom Dean had a brand new 1949 Ford. We played on the Cambridge station for a while and then Bronzy wanted

us to go to Annapolis. So we went and all and that was part of the advertising that the boats had the fare lines. And I think he got some boats from us being on that station."

O'Neal says that Bronza Parks' boats of the time were distinctive because of the attention to every detail. "It was just a process of working at it and it paid off because when the boat went out and you looked at it, it would catch your eye. Like a car all shined up, you just turn around and take that second look."

By the mid 1950s, B.M. (the "M" stands for Malone) Parks Boat Builders was turning out 25 work and pleasure boats a year. "I am sure that there were ten, eleven or twelve boats going there at one time," O'Neal recalls.

One family legend that Trudi Jones tries to track down with O'Neal is an oft told story of how Bronza would make a grand entrance by first throwing his hat into a room and then cartwheel though the door. O'Neal is first confused by the question, thinking she has asked if he ever made a wheel for a cart. "You mean like a calisthenic?" O'Neal asks.

"I was always amazed that with the size of Papa he would be able to do one," Trudi says.

O'Neal replies, "When you are young, it makes a lot of difference. He was full of foolishness like that, you know." O'Neal Dean concludes his interview by saying, "I was grateful that he took me in and I was able to accomplish things that I learned by him. He was a good teacher and he needs to be mentioned and the work that he done. He treated me good. It's a poor person that can't praise the bridge that carried him across."

For Tom Dean, one of the great memories of the boatyard days was the launching time. "That was a great day. Oh that was fun. We always had a great celebration. I was in a band at that time with Charles and O'Neal. We used to play music under the boat waiting for the launching time. Everyone was jolly and always this favorite song. He always got us to sing and play it for him. 'Just a Closer Walk With Thee.' That was his favorite song. After that, we would have a half day off and then come Monday mornin' we were back putting a keel down."

Near the end of the recording, Trudi pauses and asks, "Tom, I have one request. Would you sing, 'A Closer Walk With Thee'?" Dean, who was then 73, doesn't miss a beat and slips into an a cappella rendition of the old hymn.

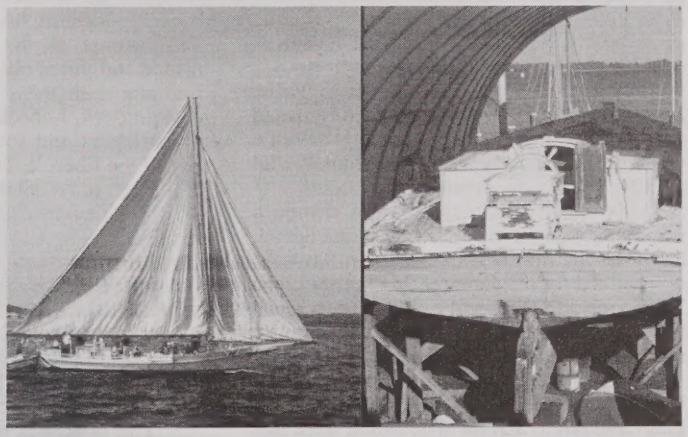
I am weak, but Thou art strong;
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I'll be satisfied as long
As I walk, let me walk closer to Thee.
Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

Parks family members still recall hearing that favorite song, sung with a mournful tone at the close of Bronza Parks' funeral, 55 years ago.

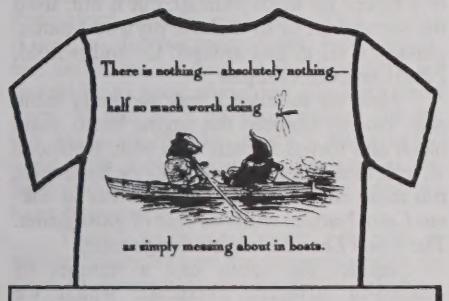
**A Note from Trudi Jones:**

"I am truly honored to know that the recorded conversations I had with two of my grandfather's long time employees will be shared. These conversations have been deeply treasured by me and it is my hope that these will continue to tell the story of Bronza Parks' legacy and how much people loved him."

Tom Dean, O'Neal Dean, Ralph Ruark playing music while waiting for the tide to come up before launching a new boat. Circa 1950, Parks Family Collection.



The *Rosie Parks* then and now undergoing restoration for relaunching in the fall.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# Buying and Restoring of a 1973 Marshall Marine 22' Catboat

By John Orlando

I want to preface this story by telling readers I once was a kid growing up in Brooklyn, New York. As far back as I could remember my paternal grandfather owned a summer home out in Centerport, Long Island. It was like a little estate, Grandpa Mike had four sons and two daughters and all their families would summer in Centerport. Of course, Grandpa loved his children and loved his grandchildren more, so it was in his loving nature that we all be together with him!

I was a very young kid of about five or six years old and vaguely remember the property had its own beach on Northport Harbor and a dock to which a number of boats were tied up, mainly a 30' Elco Sedan Cruiser named *Regina*. In later years I once asked one of my cousins about the name. He told me, "I think Gramps bought the boat with the name and just left it." So, even though I was raised in the land of concrete and asphalt, my family had boating experience, how much I do not know.

I always was told that while Gramp used *Regina* to fish she was mainly used to bring out his political cronies from Brooklyn to anchor in Northport Harbor and play pinochle undisturbed. When Grampa passed away in the late '50s my uncles sold the little estate and we all had to fend for ourselves concerning summer vacation homes. My family decided to rent houses in Sayville, Long Island. Well, that summer Long Island experienced a big hurricane and Sayville went underwater. My mother profoundly told my dad, "I am never coming back here!"

My father had a friend who owned a summer home out in Patchogue, Long Island, and after the disastrous summer in Sayville, we rented it for the summer. My family loved Patchogue and the Great South Bay so much the next winter my pop purchased the house and we owned it until my mom passed away in 2004. Our neighbors, a doctor and their six kids, became lifelong friends. Dr Dick (as we kids called him) and his wife Marie were like second parents to me.

Dr Dick owned a 28' Gil Smith catboat named *Cormorant* in which he took us kids sailing every Saturday, Sunday and Wednesdays. Dr Dick taught us all how to sail on that beautifully maintained Gil Smith boat. She was like a finely built piece of furniture. Magnificent cannot justly describe this work of art. Patchogue, Long Island was the home of the famous Gilbert M. Smith, I do remember his yard on West Avenue, it was owned and operated as Bob Ritches Boat Yard.

So this was my introduction to sailing. Through the years I've sailed and raced Beetle Cats, Snipes, Stars, Sunfish, Comets, Nerrasketucks (a local one-design developed by Wilbur Ketcham of Amityville) and a 1974 18' Marshall Cat, Hull #317 (she is still sailing on the Great South Bay and now is named the *Piping Plover*). I named the 18' Marshall the *Erica Lee*.

I was introduced to the Marshall Cats by a number of local owners. One in particular was a real gentlemen named Hill Bennett, his boat a Marshall 18 named *Ali Cat* is another early '70s Marshall Cat that is still sailing on the Bay. Bill and I would go sailing frequently and I enjoyed the catboat so much I made the purchase of the *Erica Lee* from a member of the Sayville Yacht Club, which hosts the annual Great South Bay Catboat Association Rendezvous every September. I raced the *Erica Lee* for about ten years, won a lot of trophies and enjoyed the friendship and camaraderie among the catboat sailors.

Then back in 1990 a rare bug bit me and infected me with the Offshore Fishing Disease. It took my doctors 12 years to finally cure me. But after countless boats, overfishing, rising cost of fuel, the constant roar of those 8-92 Detroit Diesels guzzling fuel, the cure came in finding, I must add by a mistake, a derelict Marshall 22' catboat in an off the road, out of the way boatyard in Aquebogue, Long Island.

Now for the beginning of the rebirth of the *Erica Lee* (Erica Lee is my daughter's name, she is my shining star and always will be). Well, I just stared at this boat, she was a total mess. The cockpit and cabin interior were painted baby blue, filled with leaves, louvered doors smashed in, portside of hull gouged and scraped, all the rigging shot, boom gooseneck broken, teak rubrails split and cracked, all the gelcoat was badly tarnished and pitted etc, etc. Although I did not find any sponginess in the decks, cabin top, cockpit deck, I checked all the bilges and all the stringers and found no delamination or any of the fiberglass taping on the stringer to hull joints to be delaminated and lifting.

The Yanmar diesel looked really in good shape. I checked all the exhaust fittings and found them in good shape, fuel tank was not visible but I did not detect any leaks or odor of fuel. The bottom of the centerboard and rudder looked sound and solid. By this time a gent came over to me and asked if he could help me, I asked if the boat was for sale, he said, "Yep!"

The boat was owned by a writer who lived in New York City and summered out here. She bought the boat about two-and-a-half years earlier from a couple in New Jersey. He said she was not an experienced sailor and the catboat was too much for her to handle and the Diesel was installed just prior to her buying the boat and maybe had 25 hours on it. He also said the sails were OK but someone removed all the reef lines.

My next question was, how much was she asking? He said $15,500 so she had not had many, if any, offers and the boat had been on the hard for two years. I asked him for his telephone number and went on my way. I am not an expert an repairing or restoring boats, through the years I had built a couple of iceboats, restored one boat, a Nerasssketuck which was built by Asa Smith, Gil Smith's son. I believe no matter what shape a fiberglass boat is in, as long as you have the money and are willing to spend it, it can be restored no matter what.

After a day or two I called the boatyard and made a ridiculous offer of $5,500. I felt I could feel the owner out and work up from that point. To my surprise two hours later Mike from the boat yard called and said she would take it. "Oh boy," I said to Mike, "I will be out in an hour." I was thinking I have to seal this deal before she has time to think about it. Bank check in hand, I purchased the boat.

At this point I want to say, anyone who does not have any idea of what to look for when buying a fiberglass boat should hire a certified marine surveyor. I myself would and have hired a surveyor when buying a big sportfisherman. You could really get burned, delamination, blistered bottom, spongy decks, rotted bulkheads are all repairable but would be real expensive.

I then had a boat hauler bring the boat to Frank Weeks Yacht Yard in Patchogue, New York. This was in October 2004. After a few days she was moved into one of their boat sheds. Whenever I could get away from my office I went down to the yard and started to strip her down. I removed all of her teak rubrails, cabin eyebrow, cockpit coaming, doors, door frames, hand rails and some interior teak (very little interior work had to be removed, it was in good shape).

I removed all hardware, cleats, chocks, traveler, hatches and hatch track, starboard and port windows and frames. I removed the shaft, propeller, cutlass bearing and the engine coupling. At this point I had a real naked lady. I then did an inventory of what new hardware and teak I would need, that turned out to be everything. Marshall Marine sent everything and I want to add that Geoff Marshall could not have been a more cooperative, congenial and knowledgeable perrson to deal with. I choose to replace the cabin doors with the bifold ones.

At this point I had to have Weeks Boat Yard step in and help. First order of business was to replace the prop shaft, cutlass bearing and coupling. I chose to paint the cabin interior and cockpit deck, the cabin was painted gloss white with Interlux Brightside. I held off doing the deck. Weeks craftsmen went to work on the hull and decks, replacing the nonskid and fairing of the hull. Hours upon hours were put in the preparation of the hull and decks for painting, I chose to use Awlgrip Flag Blue for the hull, white cabin sides and cockpit coaming sides and medium gray for the decks. Medium gray is an identical match for Interlux Brightside Kingston Gray.

By now it's July 1, Weeks did a magnificent paint job. While I was painting the cabin I did find a rotten spot about 18"x18" on the lower half of the cabin bulkhead on the starboard side between the engine compartment and the hanging locker. It was very interesting to me to see how Weeks repaired it. They drilled holes about the area 'til they found solid wood. Then they made a pattern traced on the bulkhead, cut it out, used the same pattern to make a plywood patch, glassed it all in and around. Lo and behold, I had one perfect repair.

Next we installed a teak and holly cabin sole, smartly covered the engine hatch, main hatch and forward hatch with teak. Replaced all teak trim, bifold louvered doors, hand rails, rub rails, etc, etc., applied five coats of Sikens Cetol Natural with one coat of gloss sealer. The *Erica Lee* was really taking shape.

Inside, the cabin had a number of glassed-in stringers overhead, which we teaked which gave the cabin a very warm ambiance. We also installed a brass rubrail on the the teak rub rail. I found a company in Callfornia that made bronze cowl vents which I purchased and installed, replacing the plastic ones. J.M. Reinick Co makes beautiful bronze running lights, which with the cowl vents added a very traditional look to the boat.

While the Weeks people were working, I totally removed all the hardware from the mast, boom and gaff and replaced

all the old hardware with new. I painted the mast and spars Kingston Gray with the ends painted white. I ordered a new sail from Quantum Sails.

It was now late August and I wanted to participate in the Catboat Association Great South Bay Regatta at the Sayville Yacht Club. I did want to do more on the boat but put the brakes on for now. We launched her, rigged her with all new Harken blocks, new halyards and sheets. *Erica Lee* turned out to be a real eye catcher! As the reader of this article you have to understand that while one never forgets how to sail, one does lose the racing edge and instinct. I started sailing her around the bay, and went to the Bellport Bay Yacht Club's Labor Day Regatta and was not impressed with my performance.

On the Saturday morning of the Catboat Rendezvous my friend Roger and my 16-year-old niece Christine and I left Bellport for the hour-and-a-half sail to the Sayville Club. I had not sailboat raced in ten to twelve years and well, to my surprise, it all came back. We had two races for 19' and over, I won both starts and both races. I can't describe the wonderful feeling to be sailing again. The *Erica Lee* was also awarded the most beautiful boat trophy. I felt very proud of this major accomplishment.

Finally one rainy afternoon, alone in my office, decided to add up all the expenses. When I punched the last figure into the calculator and pressed total, I immediately felt chest pains, I had spent $31,550 in total. I had no idea what this was all costing in the eleven months of restoration. Am I sorry I spent that much? No. Am I surprised? Sure was. Would I ever see a return of my money if I should sell her? No. Would I do it again? Maybe. My big mistake was not keeping track of the expenses.

I do have a beautiful catboat and an extreme sense of pride and satisfaction. I had a teak hand carved nameboard made, and to look at her transom with the Flag Blue hull and the teak nameboard with white lettering just overwhelms me. One last comment: I am not saying anything unfavorable about other fiberglass catboat manufacturers, but I must say Marshall Catboats have endured for 50 years and I was really surprised with how little hull problems I had with my restoration.

Happy Sailing.

# John Gardner Chapter TSCA News

By Phil Behney

**February 22**

This week we will continue with work on the dory conversion. Thanks to all of you who helped last week, especially Shirley, John, Sandy and the rest who sanded the interior of Dory #3. We still need to prep the rub rails and the exterior, so there is still plenty for all to stay busy.

Good progress was made on Dory #4 last week. Bruce came in and finished up the transom repair during the day, and the rest of us were able to glue and screw some of the new frames in place before we left for the evening. We will continue this with seats and seat risers and any other details that may need to be addressed, so don't abandon ship yet we still have much to accomplish!

Check out the latest pics at this link for our Face book page: https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151279028927724&set=a.10151194825047724.458083.247714997723&type=1&theater

**March 1**

Last Friday progress was made on the two dories in the shop. The seat risers are in on Dory #1 and one seat is ready for fastening. Dory #2 had her rub rails sanded and varnished thanks to Shirley, Bill and Karen Rutherford, Sandy and Jim. This Friday if we can do two more seats, foot stretchers, and some sanding on the first dory we should be in good shape for a Sunday paint party. I will pick up some primer for the job. We have decided to try a water-based paint with mold inhibitor this time as we have had trouble with the alkaline paint we have been using.

Thanks to Bruce Cresser who was in earlier Friday to tape the transom seams on Dory #1. Bruce will only be able to help for a limited time which is why I have been pushing hard to finish up the dories, Bruce is our most experienced builder so I would like to able to get a good start on the *Nina* before he has to leave.

Bill has suggested we replace our cordless drills and there have been discussions about other equipment. With spring at hand anyone with ideas or suggestions about messabouts or activities other than our Friday nights in the shop are encouraged to bring them up at our meetings.

For our monthly Sunday meeting Al Burnett from the Mystic Seaport Museum will tell us about the happenings at the Seaports boathouse.

Check out John Hacunda's latest photos at our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/JGTSCA

**March 13**

We had a good monthly meeting on the third of March. Thank you to Al Burnett from Mystic Seaports Livery for giving an update on upcoming plans, including the reinstatement of Tuesday evening Beetle Cat races. The Livery owns seven Beetle Cats and Al hopes to have them all available this summer. The livery will make available Beetles for the series for a fee estimated at about $150 to experienced sailor's for this series which will take place on the Mystic River. Al is also looking to encourage any privately owned Beetles to join in at no cost! Al is also seeking volunteers to help refurbish another notable catboat in the collection that he also hopes to put into service.

Russ Smith spoke about his efforts to obtain space at the Yale Boathouse on the Thames river to run his program for Ledyard middle school youths. Russ stated that he is working toward getting a 501c non-profit status for this program. Russ also gave an account of his participation at the Snow Row in Hull Mass on March 2 where Sean Bercaw and Tom Berry took a first place rowing the *Susan Holland*.

The meeting went longer than anticipated so we did not finish up the dory as planned, but Dory #2 is complete and returned to our Mystic location for all to use. Dory #4 is still in the shop but thanks to Bruce, Bill and myself she is nearly ready for paint. I have moved her to the rear of the shop so we can begin setting up the building jig for the *Nina* project.

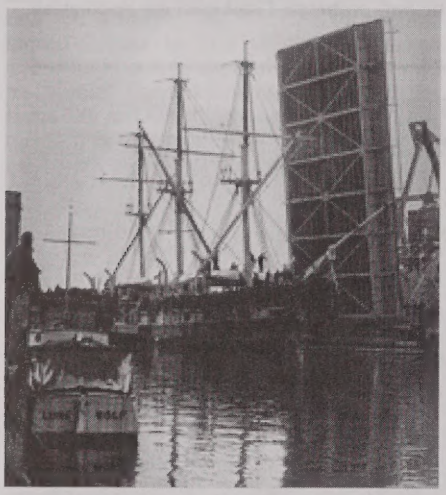
On Friday we had only four members at the shop but despite this short crew we were able to complete some final details on Dory #4 and thanks to Bruce for coming to the shop during the week and sanding the bottom and sides.

**March 21**

Last Friday we were able to paint the interior and exterior of Dory #4. I came in on Sunday and stenciled the JGTSCA logo, so all that remains is to put a second coat on the interior, mount the oarlocks, and touch up anything missed, then we can transport her to Mystic with the rest of the dories. I have included a photo of the gang working together on both dories.

April 7 will be our next monthly meeting and I will be going for a row from Mystic in a club dory before the meeting. Anyone who wishes to join me for a row on the Mystic River be at MSYE at 10am.

Pictured in her working days.



Arriving at Mystic in 1936.

A dockside attraction at Mystic Seaport for many years, sails often set in sail training programs.

Resting in a bed of gravel the *Morgan*'s waterline emerged at every low tide.

# *Charles W. Morgan*

## Her 39th Voyage

By Jon Persson

The whaling barque *Charles W. Morgan* moves through history as steadfastly, as faithfully, as her 38 previous voyages carried her across the world's oceans. Her presence, always tangible, is a collection of knowledge, information, skills, time, energy and lives; she is a piece and purveyor of history, of success achieved, events recorded and now, a past way of life re-created.

Many have made their livelihood from her form and function, the builders and restorers, sailors and owners. Events, local and global, have passed by like the waters beneath her keel, though ports and nations are transformed; the players, ever changing, enter and exit her broad decks that are stage to a portal in time. Through it all, the *Charles W. Morgan* remains a focal point to tell our story, now as then.

On a bitter cold day in January, a crew of some 32 men and women were hard at work at the task of rebuilding the *Morgan*'s hull structure in preparation for her next, her 39th, voyage. This work at Mystic Seaport represents a major conceptual shift since this last wooden whaling ship came to Mystic over 70 years ago. Then the mission was to save the ship as a record and tribute to a chapter in history not long closed; whaling had been routinely practiced mere decades before the *Morgan*'s enlightened procurement. But the directors of that time placed her in a gravel berth, assuming her last voyage had been taken, with no need remaining to set her to sail again. Today, the realization has emerged that such work as restoring and "re-living" in full measure the ways of the past is itself the most fitting tribute to an artifact of such importance.

Many skills, trades and industries are represented in the entity of the *Charles W. Morgan*. For her original builders, toiling to finish the ship in 1841, this was an expression of state of the art knowledge, the sawyer and shipbuilder, caulking gang and sparmaker, ropewalk and sailmaker. Every piece was wrought and cut by hand wielded tools; the adze and broadaxe, blacksmith's hammer and cooper's drawknife. Workers spent long hours over many years learning the trades that, with yet more long hours of labor, would put roof over head and plain food on the table.

To understand the adzeman's fatigue and feeling of accomplishment, one must take adze in hand and hew hard timber to complex shape and bevel and make the parts and pieces of a wooden ship.

For Quentin Snediker, Director of the shipyard at Mystic Seaport, the restoration of the *Charles W. Morgan* is a considerable yet thoroughly doable project. The launch date, July 21, 2013, is the 172nd anniversary of her original launching and still looms as a distant port on a long and complex voyage. "I'm confident we will make the deadline," says Quentin, who has budgeted one hour to answer questions. "There was more damage to the original structure than we originally anticipated," he laments, but the necessary work has proceeded in a timely manner.

### A Whaler's Rebuilding

Frames, sawn and adzed to shape in overlapping segments, have been fitted and installed, using the wood called live oak, some rescued from the Hurricane Katrina aftermath. "We make every effort to preserve original material, in keeping with good preservation practice," continues Quentin. He notes that "15-18% of the original construction" from 1841 remains. All original wood removed is catalogued and preserved, notes Quentin. "Wooden ships can be continuously regenerated," Quentin says, adding that "wooden vessels rot from the top down," the result of fresh water providing an environment for the growth of wood destroying fungus. On the plus side, he adds that "the bottom section has been in salt water," a brine which is a natural wood preservative.

In addition to the new framing, more than a hundred planks are being replaced on the *Morgan*. White oak is used at bow and stern and yellow pine at the midsections, the heavy boards sawn in the yard's chainsaw mill by Bob Delnickas and crew. The boards, 10" wide and up to 40' in length, are then run through a heavy thickness planer. Each plank must then be cut to shape to fit the previous plank, a spiling board used to transfer the curve and widths required.

A large steambox sits outside the *Morgan*'s protective plastic shed, where 200° wet steam turns green lumber boards into pliabtle pieces that may be bent around the *Morgan*'s hull. This shaping is a task requiring many hands and clamps, wedges, ropes and raw strength. Fastenings are intermittent bronze spikes, filled out with 1⅛" diameter black locust trunnels (essentially large dowels), splayed with lignum vitae wedges at the outer end.

"The trunnels must be of dry stock so they swell upon contact with the water," explains Quentin. It is the same method used to fasten the planking of wooden ships for many centuries. The planking is then caulked with oakum over cotton, continues Quentin, the strands driven home with mallet and caulking irons. Caulk is a part of the structure of wooden ships, the caulking driven hard to harden the ship's hull, more than simply keeping water out. Caulking lessens the twisting and flexing that would otherwise weaken and destroy a ship at sea under press of sail.

"We take a 25 to 30-year view on a restoration such as this," explains Quentin. It's a normal timeframe for the care and maintenance of such a vessel, with major interventions required at roughly those intervals to preserve the vessel. The work being done now will last "50 or more years," Quentin says, with future work most likely being required in other areas.

### The Next Voyage: New London in 2014

After her launching on July 21, the *Charles W. Morgan* will complete her rerigging and preparation for her return to sea. Then, in the spring of 2014, she will be moved to New London; the deeper harbor will allow for her final ballasting and rigging out. Initial sea trials will be made out of New London, where her crew will be able to fine tune the rig while perfecting the points of sailing the barque. Her rig will indeed be as it has been since the early 1900s, a barque; though it is known she was originally ship-rigged, with square sails on all masts.

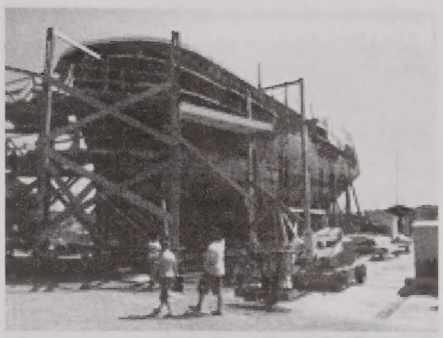
Readying to take down the rig preparatory to the restoration.

Haulout at the Seaport's shipyard.

And finally, the *Charles W. Morgan* will return offshore. She will undertake an ambitious voyage for a ship of 172 years, unparalleled in the annals of sailing history. She will make ports of call in Newport, Martha's Vineyard, New Bedford (her homeport), Provincetown and Boston. And while there are no plans to subject her to the rigors of ocean voyaging in the future, she will be given the occasional shakedown in observance of special events.

In her prime, the *Charles W. Morgan* was an exemplar of the industry, the pursuer and processor of whale oil, source of improved lighting for several American generations. Her working career spanned some 80 years. Sharing in her success were the barrel makers, whaleboat builders, lampmakers, shopkeepers and the many shipmates who partook in the multi year voyages in search of adventure and financial success. She was part of a fleet and trade that very nearly drove the source of its own fortunes into extinction until the discovery of more ancient oils from long extinct creatures drove the whaling fleet off the seas and saved the magnificent whales from man's enterprising spirit.

We cannot stand in judgment of what past generations could not have known. But the cycles of industries once prosperous falling into obsolescence or to depletion of resources continues; and yet, when the *Charles W. Morgan* sets sail in 2014, she will be powered, now as then and for the years to come, by the power of breezes stirred by the energy of the sun.



Preliminary staging is set up.

With restoration well underway, the *Morgan* looms up over the Seaport.

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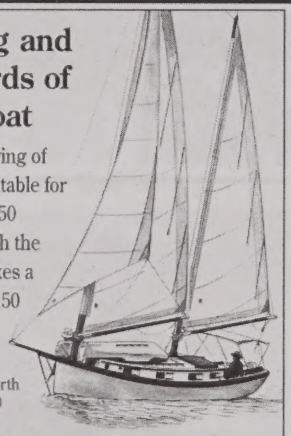

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The APPRENTICE
A Monthly Newsletter of the Apprenticeshop

# Introducing...
# CORE Concepts of Wooden Boat Building
## A New Program for New Boat Builders

In its 40-year history The Apprenticeshop has honed its model for traditional boat building courses. Students learn through direct, hands-on experience in order to develop both hard and soft skills. For the first time, 2013 divides our traditional apprenticeship into two parts.

CORE is a nine-month program designed for students new to boat building. It is a rigorous introduction and direct experience of the craft, exposing the student to all skills needed to become a working boat builder. Several boat projects are taken on, from loft to launch, that include elements of drawing and design, both traditional plank-on-frame and composite construction, fastening, finishing and yacht joinery. Seamanship training includes an expedition on Penobscot Bay and weekly (in-season) sailing.

Students completing this course should expect to gain the skills necessary for an entry level position in a wooden boat building shop or yard. For more information visit our website: http://www.apprenticeshop.org/apprenticeship/ or download our 2013 catalog.

Currently enrolling for September 2013 register by May 1 for a significant discount!

ADVANCED New Construction & Restoration pre-requisite is CORE year or special permission of instructor. In the second year, students who have achieved the skills and confidence of basic wooden boat construction become apprentices on commissioned or custom boat builds.

Designs incorporated through this course of study are dependent on the clients, and past projects have included the 28' Leonard whaleboat for the *Charles W. Morgan*, a 23' Gilmer design Blue Moon, a variety of small skiffs and tenders and various restorations including a 31' Haj and a 30' Olympic 5.5 meter racing sloop.

Working in tandem with the master builder, the apprentice learns how to solve unpredictable problems, to be innovative and develops a deep sense of craftsmanship. Concurrently, apprentices gain the experience of balancing the resources of time and materials and learn the nuances of client relationships.

Active participants in The Apprenticeshop community, second year apprentices will assist in managing all Apprenticeshop boats, have the opportunity to teach public workshops and assist first year students. During the boating season, weekly opportunities for sailing continue.

## Current Shop Projects

We welcome guests to the Apprenticeshop to visit with apprentices and interns and to observe boats in progress on the shop floor. Stop by any time of the year, Monday through Friday between 9am and 4:30pm. If you can make it up to Maine to pay us a visit, check in on our website beforehand for updates on projects and launchings. Projects currently underway for winter/spring 2013 are the following:

### Whaleboat for *Charles W. Morgan*: A Contribution to a National Preservation Effort

Senior apprentices Tim Jacobus and Chris Konecky make progress on the Leonard whaleboat for the *Charles W. Morgan*.

In 2012 The Apprenticeshop was invited to participate in the restoration of the *Charles W. Morgan,* the world's only existing wooden whaleship, which resides at Mystic Seaport. We were asked to build a whaleboat, one of the seven 30' boats that accompanied the whaleship on her years long hunting expedition.

Whaleboats were stored onboard until a whale was sighted. They were then lowered into the sea and sent in pursuit of the whale. Each boat was operated by one of the ship's officers and five oarsmen. Traditional whaleboats were beautiful craft adapted for a brutal purpose. Light and strong, these double-ended boats were packed with whale hunting gear. The *Morgan* carried five whaleboats hanging in davits with two more in reserve on deck. About 1200' of whale line were coiled in two tubs, then run around a loggerhead at the stern and forward over the oars to connect to the harpoons at the bow. Over her 80 years the *Morgan* carried whaleboats from yards around the world. The Apprenticeshop will replicate the Leonard Boatshop's design, probably the most obscure of the *Morgan's* hunting fleet.

The very last of the wooden whaleships in existence of some 2700 that were built between 1700-1900, the *Morgan* is undergoing a massive restoration that began in 2008. The 106' bark will re-launch in July 2013. Mystic's ambitious project then sets the *Morgan* on her 38th voyage, sailing from her home port up the coast to Stellwagen Bank off Cape Cod. With an Apprenticeshop-built boat on her deck the *Morgan's* voyage will culminate a national preservation effort and place her in the forefront of maritime education.

Apprentices Daniel Kresher, Kirk Folk, Simon Jack, Tim Jacobus and Chris Konecky completed the lofting phase of the whaleboat with help from plans on loan from MIT's Hart Nautical Collection. Tim Jacobus, Kirk Folk and Chris Konecky, apprentices who are currently working on the whaleboat, will see the project through to its completion with an anticipated local launch in Rockland on June 14. The whaleboats' second launch, aboard the *Morgan*, is scheduled for July and will likely claim national attention.

### The Herreshoff Dinghy Project

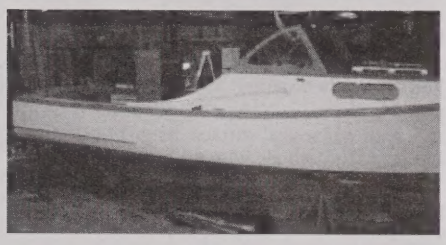
Senior apprentice Simon Jack and first year apprentice Rachel Davis planking the Columbia Herreshoff dinghy.

Apprentices Simon Jack and Rachel Davis completed their third week of work on the Columbia dinghy project by March 1. With the booklet from Mystic Seaport, *Building the Herreshoff Dinghy: The Manufacturer's Method,* by Barry Thomas and a few well seasoned boat builders offering advice and guidance they are off to a good start towards a June 14 launch date. This dinghy will be 10' rather than 11'6", so already the lofting was full of adjustments and lessons. Keeping the shape of the stern was of utmost importance, so the changes came in the body of the boat and they ended up with nine molds to make. Fairing the lines along their lofting board was magic as all the points on the two-dimensional surface, with a bit of spacial imagination, relate and form a three-dimensional boat. Then on to transom expansion and pondering the foreshortening, bevels and plank thickness.

Making molds was great fun and quick. With a brilliant method of pounding nails in sideways along the body plan (so one side of the heads stick above the board), then hammering the wood for the molds over them (so the projecting halves of the heads indent), then fairing the lines, they pulled up symmetrical molds in no time, one for each of the nine stations along the body of the boat and marked waterlines, sheer and buttock lines. Simon lay down a center line on a piece of ply and screwed it to the floor, then leveled out and cleated the molds. With swinging plumb bob and a few levels they built up the structure which will support the dinghy until she is flipped. Essential to be level and with a centre line! What other reference does one have on such a lovely curved boat? So great care was taken.

Next Simon prepared oak for the frames, tied it tight and left it off our pier under curtains of sea fog to soak up the (freezing) weather and tide in Rockland Harbor. Using the transom expansion they drew on the lofting board Rachel made patterns for the transom and knee. Finally cutting the transom out of mahogany she needed only to dive into the depths of the wood storage to find some hackmatack for the knee. They pulled out the steambox and those nicely weathered frames Simon had prepared. They steamed for 30 minutes and the two of them found a good rhythm bending and clamping the frames along the beveled molds. The next steps will be floor timbers, bending the stem, organizing the transom in relation to the molds and cutting the keel.

### The *White Lady* Lobsterboat Restoration



Apprentices Daniel Creisher and Bridget Jividen are at work on *White Lady*, a 26' lobsterboat which arrived at The Apprenticeshop this winter for a complete restoration. It was built, at least partially, by Norman Hodgdon, a well-known builder in the Boothbay area. We were told it was the last boat he worked on before passing away. It was built of mahogany and oak in 1967. It has spent its whole life on the Damariscotta River in the Newcastle area.

When the boat was first brought in we took the lines of the hull and began dismantling parts that would be replaced. Her windshield, house, deck, sole and ceiling have all been removed. Her engine, fuel system, head and electrical system are all out. We are now in the process of reframing her. We are replacing the broken steam bent frames with laminated ones, as these are stronger and should not break as the originals did.

## From the Shop Floor

### Welcome Bryan McCarthy New Shop Director

We are delighted to announce that we have a new Shop Director on staff! Bryan McCarthy, a native of Falmouth, Massachusetts, comes to us with a degree from the University of Maine (Orono) where he studied adventure education, business marketing and natural resources. An avid and capable kayaker, McCarthy lived in southern California for many years and trained for the Olympics. He is a licensed Maine Guide and has led numerous trips on land and sea through Maine Sport Outfitters.

In 2002, McCarthy received his diploma in wooden boat construction from the Landing School. Since then, he has served as a shipwright at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum and the Maritime Museum of San Diego (where he also taught boat building and served as a deck hand and instructor on the topsail schooner *Californian*). In Maine, he has worked for Rockport Marine and, most recently, Front Street Shipyard in Belfast.

# BOB'S BOATS BUILDING & REPAIR

# In My Shop

By Mississippi Bob

I left you last month with a description of how I planned to smooth off my new canoe before glassing. This has changed slightly. I found that I used my block plane more than I had on past boats and it definitely shortened the process. On the outside of this boat I was working with a convex surface most of the time. Up near the gunnels where I have the shoulder tumblehome the plane didn't work at all. At this point I needed to find another system. Fortunately most of the exterior is convex.

On the bottom of the hull most strips join one another at slight angles. This ridge that is created can be planed smooth, reducing the sanding required. This doesn't work nearly as well on the flatter areas of the bottom and not at all where the surface goes concave as on the tumblehome sections.

For the sections that the plane didn't reach into I found the that my modified paint scraper did. The blade has a cylindrical shape that I reground to give the cutting edge a curved shape. This is the same tool that I used to remove the glue lumps. Removing the glue is important as it tends to gum up the sandpaper. I sharpened it after the glue work and found that it did a fair job of smoothing the concave areas.

When I got into the sanding I used the system shown in Photo #1. The round section of sewer pipe over the hull is connected to my dust collector with a flexible tube. The tube connected to my sander is hooked up to my shop vac. I went to work with #60 grit and smoothed the exterior prior to any glassing. I had Gene Jenson, the great race canoe designer, over for coffee one day and he said that the one word that described canoe building better that any other was "sanding."

Photo #1

I started glassing the hull with two bias strips on each end. Photos #2 and #3 show this happening. I started with a very narrow strip and epoxied it into place using a 1" chip brush. I immediately followed this with a wider strip. I find that any cut edges on a glass job end up lumpy so by installing the wider one the inner one gets smoothed down. Now I only have one edge to sand smooth. This operation requires that the strips be cut on the bias. This allows the cloth to wrap smoothly around the curved end. Photo #3 shows the finished job. If you try to do this with straight cut pieces you will get a lot of puckers near the edges of your work.

I let the ends cure overnight, then sanded the patches thoroughly, then sanded the entire outside, this time with a finer paper. The reason for this final sanding is that I have found that the cedar wood darkens up even just overnight. I believe that the wood is oxidizing and I want the freshest surface that I can get. I am after the max in contrast among the different woods. The final photos show this.

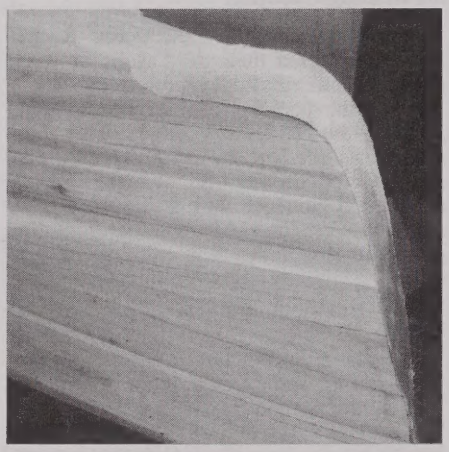


Photo #2

Photo #3

I began glassing the main sheet of fabric in one continuous piece. I am doing this boat with 4oz fabric that is 50" wide. That is enough to go from gunnel to gunnel on this small solo canoe. I first roll it out on the bottom and cut it to length. My next step is to turn the fabric so it is diagonal and doesn't run straight down the bottom. I do this by pulling it down on one end till the opposite side is just below the gunnel then I go to the other end and do the same on the opposite end. I smooth the glass and pull out any wrinkles. Putting the glass on this way helps it to wrap smoothly around the hull. When I'm satisfied I trim off anything that hangs down more than 1" below the gunnels. I save the large triangles that I trimmed off.

Now I am ready to get to work in earnest on glassing the bottom. I don't start if I am short of time. This operation must be completed in one big step. I like to use a paint roller to apply the epoxy. The one shown in Photo #4 is not my first choice, I prefer one with very short fibers. The one shown worked but it laid on more resin than I liked. I always start at the center of the boat and work both ways. I make a band from gunnel to gunnel that is completely wet out. I can tell when it is because the fabric goes transparent.

Photo #4

I like to use small batches, ones that fit in a Spam can are perfect. When the first batch is on I take the squeegee and move any surplus resin toward the ends. Additional batches go on alternately from one end then the other, always stretching and smoothing as I go. Photo #5 shows how I work to the ends. I use the squeegee a lot to move any excess resin. This extra resin does not make the boat stronger it only adds weight. I use the squeegee also to smooth down any wrinkles that may form near the gunnels. When I near the ends I cut off any excess cloth about 1/4" short of the end. I do this just before I wet it out but wait until then because the glass will creep a little and get longer during the operation.

Photo #5

When the ends are completed I go back over the boat and look for any starved spots. If I find any I roll on a little more resin and smooth it down with the squeegee. Next I go once over the entire boat with the squeegee, this time working from the keel toward the gunnels. I keep an eye open for any puckers at this time, they often form near the gunnel. When I am satisfied I clean up the mess and walk away. I remove the roller cover while I still can but I don't throw it into a trash container with any combustibles as they can sometimes get very hot as the resin cures. The next day I come back and enjoy my work.

I like to apply a couple of more bias strips and I usually wait until the resin has cured enough to sand to do this. I sanded the entire hull with some finer paper as there is a lot of texture showing through from the fabric at this point and other small lumps that always seam to show up from somewhere. I next added two more bias pieces, then with a smooth roller coated the entire outside again. Photo #6 shows what the boat looks like at this stage. There is a slightly opaque area where the four layers of bias cloth sandwich the main sheet of fabric. I'm not happy about this but I want these ends strong as this is where I hit the rocks.

The next operation will be to remove the hull from the forms. I will get back to you on that. I now have something that looks like a boat but let me assure you I am just about halfway done with this canoe.

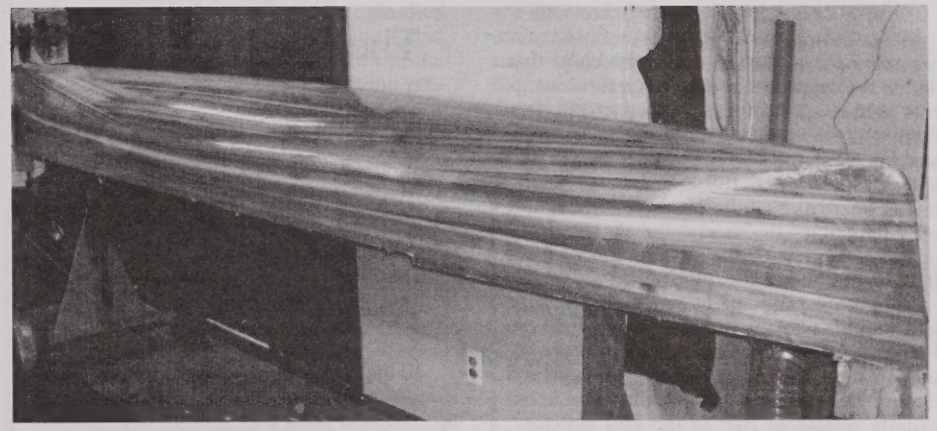
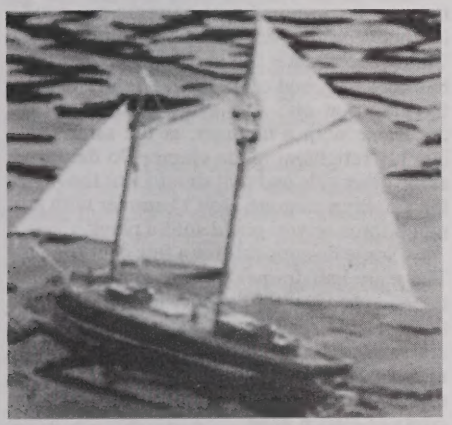
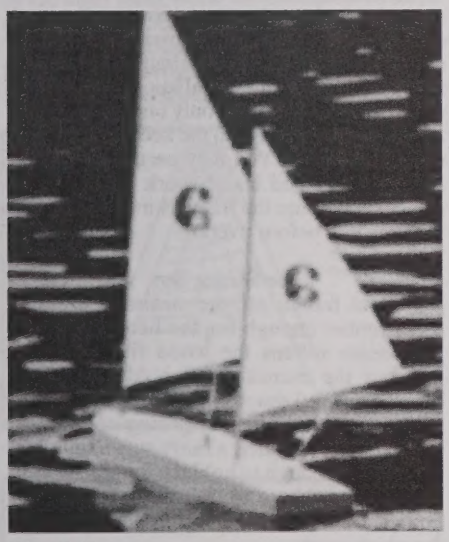


Photo #6

Semi-Scale



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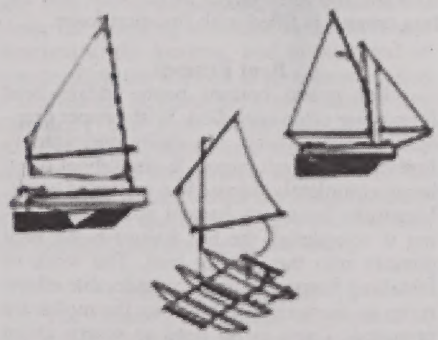
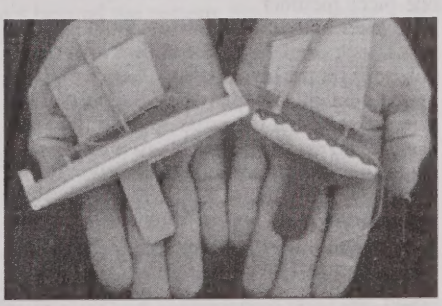
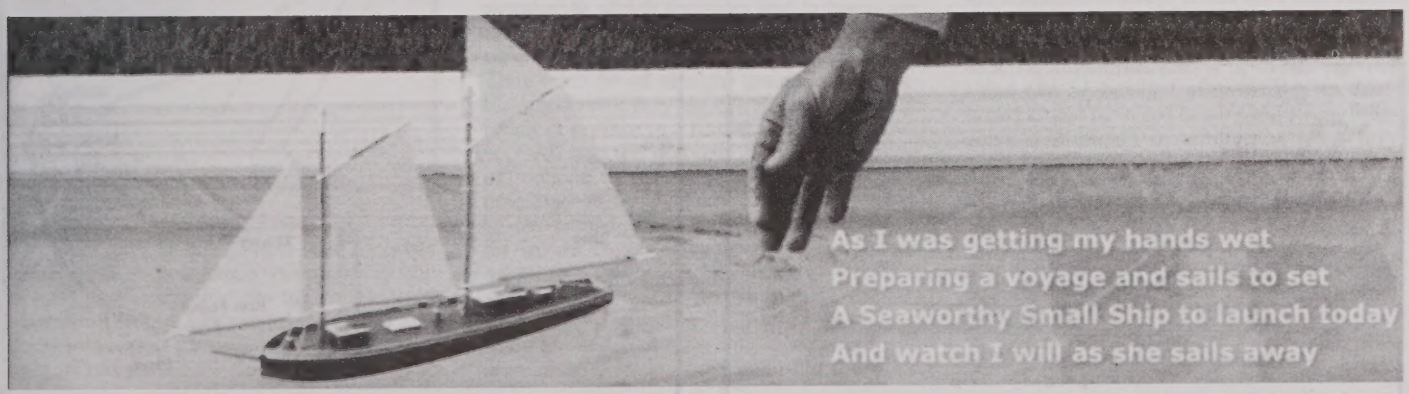


Plans for Scratch Builders

Happy Builders



Sea Flea Viking & Dinghy


As I was getting my hands wet
Preparing a voyage and sails to set
A Seaworthy Small Ship to launch today
And watch I will as she sails away

# The Boat Skeleton

By Warren Jordan
Jordan Wood Boats
www.jordanwoodboats.com

Skeleton is the term I use for those components of a boat (minus the planking) that define the shape and provide structural integrity. If the boat is of traditional construction, there will probably be a backbone (keel, keelson, knees, stem and transom) which you will assemble using the full size lofting on the layout board as a guide. The hull will be built over temporary molds and the skeleton will be completed with the installation of bent frames after the boat is planked.

In skiffs and many types of boats of less complex form, the skeleton will likely be made up of simple components, consisting of stem, transom, frames, keelson and chines. The frames act as building molds but usually remain as part of the hull structure. There are a number of woods that work well for the skeleton components but avoid ones with low decay resistance. Your lumber does not have to be perfect quality but longitudinal structural members (chines, keelson, etc) should be clear and straight grained so they bend without breaking

### Molds

Molds are the temporary forms around which some types of boats are built. Their sole purpose is to hold the boat's shape during construction, so they can be made from plywood or particle board, or any other inexpensive and stiff material. They can also be built up from lumber gusseted together at the joints. Mold shapes are picked up from the full size lofting on the layout board.

### Sawn Frames

For hard chine boats (V-bottom or flat bottom) the frames are simple structures, made up of just three or four pieces. For flat bottom, or shallow V-hulls, frames consist of two side members and a single bottom member, but as the depth of a V-bottom hull increases it can become impractical to use a single piece bottom member so it is often made up of two pieces meeting at the centerline, and joined with a floor timber that bridges the keel to duplicate the strength of a one-piece member.

After cutting all frame or mold components, tack or clamp them in their respective positions on the layout board. Check for correct alignment, and then assemble the parts as specified. Attach the cross spall in the position shown on the layout board and mark its centerline, then transfer all reference marks to the mold or frame. You will use these as guides for setting up the frames or molds on the jig, and sometimes to establish the location of some of the other parts.

For beveled parts (inclined transoms etc), check to see if your pattern is taken to the inside or outside face and make sure to allow enough extra material if the bevel projects beyond the pattern. There are two common ways to assemble the joints of rigid frames:

### Lap Joint

This is the simplest joint, in which the side members lap the bottom member and are fastened with glue and carriage bolts or screws. The drawback to this kind of joint is the offset at the chine corner that makes laying out the frame for beveling a little more complicated. Some builders like to use a half-lap joint but the two thin ends at the laps make a poor surface for holding chine fastenings.

### Double Gussetts

Gussets on both sides of the joint provide excellent strength and durability. They are made from plywood because of its resistance to splitting. Gussets at the side/bottom joint should extend at least 6" either side of the joint and are usually fastened with glue and nails. The side frame extends all the way from the sheer to the bottom. This provides solid wood when notching for the chine logs which will be attached with screws. A triangle shaped filler piece can be glued into the corner between the gussets for added strength and neatness.

### Web Frame

This is a plywood panel that spans the boat from side to side. It is usually framed on all four edges of one side, and adds immense strength and stiffness to the hull. They are often used as seat frames, their height being the level of the bottom of the seat. In some instances, they are installed in pairs, at the forward and after edges of the seat, and the box created is filled with flotation foam.

### Bent Frames

For round bottom boats, steam bent frames are often specified. With proper preparation these frames are easily and quickly formed to the hull curves, a small boat often being completely framed in a matter of hours. Lapstrake boats are framed after the planking is completed, the hot frames being bent directly into the upright hull. The work of installing frames requires considerable elbow room so, normally, at this point the molds are removed. There is no need to worry about the hull radically changing shape without the support of the molds, because the process of bending and fastening the many planks pre-stresses the hull into a structurally stable entity. In some cases, however, you may want to clamp some temporary spreaders to the sheer to stabilize the hull during framing.

### Installing Bent Frames

A helper is essential for installing bent frames because you need to work fast and from both sides of the hull. It's usually best to use one-piece frames, long enough to reach from sheer to sheer plus about 6". The framing goes like this:

Quickly remove the frame from the steam box. Lay the hot frame across the sheer and push it down to the keel in the middle. Working each side, push down while flexing and over bending the frame until it works down to its position in full contact with the planking. Some especially shapely frames may require some extreme pre-bending between foot and floor before installing. Clamp each end at the sheer then fasten it to the keel with one nail. Now, slightly loosen the clamp at one side and pop the head of the frame with a hammer, at the same time quickly retightening the clamp. Do the same at the other side and that should seat the rib to the planking contour. Don't hammer with too much force or you could split a plank.

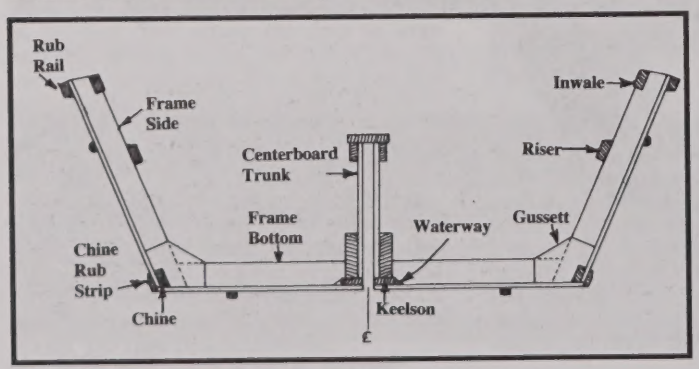
Some designs call for a few cant frames. These are half-frames that are angled toward the ends because of the curvature of the hull there. They usually butt to the stem knee and are twisted and bent to shape without hammering, then clamped at the sheer and riveted. Bent frames are usually fastened with rivets or clench nails.

Fasteners should be bored from the inside since that is the only way to position the rivet correctly in the frame/lap crossing. The frame is likely to change position slightly as it settles into the hull with the installation of each fastener, so bore and install only one or two rivets at a time, starting next to the keel and working toward the sheer. You may need to do a little light hammer and clamp work as you progress, to make sure the frame is in good contact with the hull before riveting.

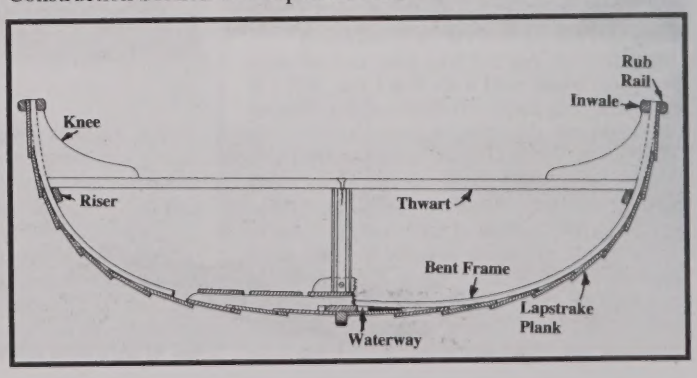
### The Steam Box

Bent frames require steaming to make them limber enough for the bends required. Hot steam softens the wood fibers enough to allow the frames to be molded and bent into the desired shapes. A steaming system is not at all complicated, requiring only a heat source, a pot of water, a fairly steam tight box that's long enough to hold the longest of your frames, and a hose to transport steam to the box. The box needs a hinged door at one end for quick access.

Construction Section of a Sailing Skiff




Construction Section of a Lapstrake Hull



The time required to steam your wood depends on the type of wood, its wetness (the greener the better) and its thickness. The old rule of thumb specifies one hour of steam for each inch of frame thickness, but there is no way to predict the exact time needed. A good test is to take a piece out of the box after 30 minutes and check for flexibility. Do so every five minutes or so until the desired results are achieved. Don't overcook your frames or they will become brittle and likely to break when bending.

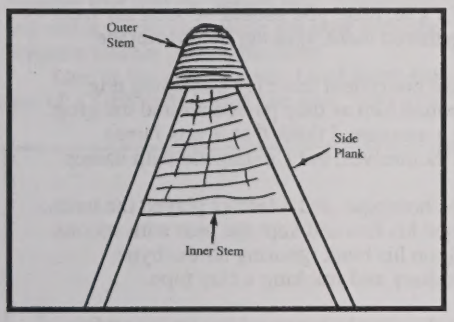
Frames of small dimension need to be installed very quickly. You will have less than a minute to do all the major flexing and pre-bending before the wood starts to stiffen, and for this reason, your steam box needs to be as close to the work as possible. You can also bend frames by boiling them in a trough over a fire. With this method you can't overcook the frames, and since the wood is soaking wet you will have longer working time.

### Stems

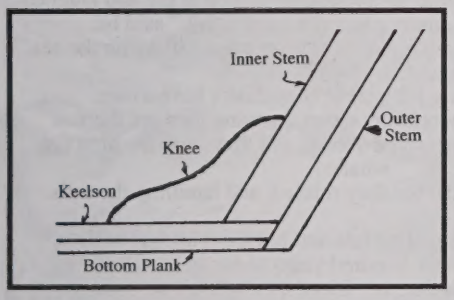
The stem is the forward most part of the skeleton. It extends from keel to sheer and is the structure that ties the sides together at the bow.

### Two-Piece Stem

The simplest type of stem and also the easiest to build is sometimes called a two-piece stem, but in reality it usually has three pieces; the inner stem, an outer (false) stem, and a knee that connects the stem to the keel or bottom. The advantage of this type of stem is that there is no need for the tedious work of cutting a rabbet. It requires only that the sides of the inner stem be beveled to the correct angle for attachment of the sides. You simply attach the side planking flush with the front of the inner stem, plane the excess off to form a flat at the nose, and cap with a false stem. The false or outer stem is usually made of hardwood for toughness and, if not straight, is either bent or laminated to shape.

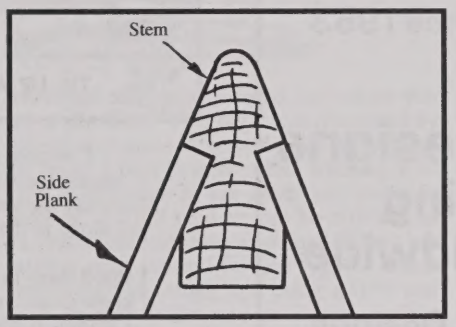



Two-Piece Stem

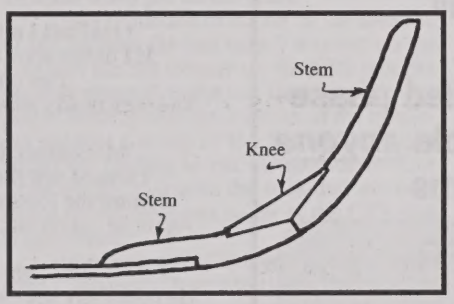



### Three-Piece Stem

This stem is most often used in boats where there is too much curvature in the forward profile to allow for the simple two-piece stem. It is usually made up of two main pieces joined by a knee. This allows the wood grain to run parallel with the stem parts for greater strength. In traditionally planked hulls, the planks usually (but not always) end in a rabbet, or groove, cut in the sides of the stem. The details for laying out, cutting, rabbeting and assembling the parts of the three-piece stem are all picked up from the full size lofting on your layout board.




Three-Piece Stem




### Keel or Keelson

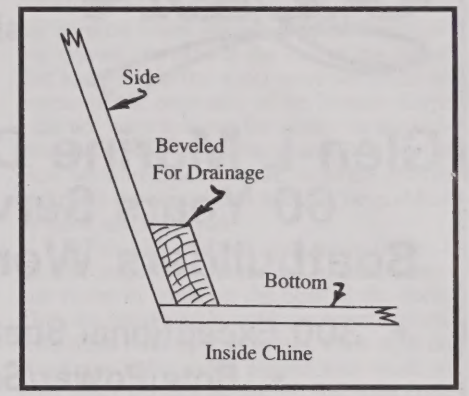
The keel or keelson is the main longitudinal structural member in most boats (a keel is located on the outside of a hull, while a keelson is located on the inside). The keelson extends from transom to stem along the bottom, on the centerline and is notched into sawn frames. In a plywood boat, the keelson is often the only centerline structural member except for an outside batten or rubbing strip and perhaps a skeg.

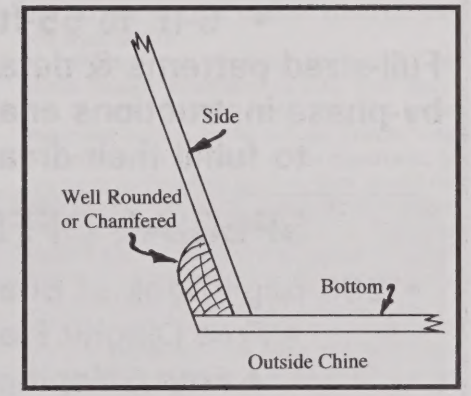
In traditionally planked hulls the keelson may be combined with an outer keel. Here, the planking is butted to the keel and attached to the keelson, and in this kind of construction the keelson is sometimes called a keel batten. In some plywood boats, where simplicity and light weight are the main goals, the only longitudinal members may be an outside keel and perhaps some battens, all of which are installed after the boat is entirely planked. This makes for a tidy interior, and the longitudinals double as rub strips.

### Chines (Chine Logs)

The chines are a critical component of any V or flat bottom boat. They run the length of the hull and are the longitudinal structural member to which the sides and bottoms are attached. Careful fitting and choice of materials for the chines can't be overemphasized. They must be of straight grained and durable wood since they are extremely difficult to repair or replace in a finished boat.

All hard chine boats have either inside or outside chines. Inside chines require notching of frames, and must butt solidly to the transom and stem. I normally prefer inside chines because they look better on most hulls and are protected from damage. Outside chines are simpler to install, requiring no notching of frames or fitting. They are installed by simply wrapping them around the outside of the hull after the sides are attached. Outside chines are easy to fasten to the stem and transom and other structural members, but require fastening from the inside along the sides, which can be awkward. They should have their upper outside corners well rounded or chamfered to reduce water resistance.




Chines

### Transoms

The transom is the flat structure at the stern of a boat to which the sides and bottom are attached. Take extra care in picking up the shapes of the transom and its framework from the layout board to make sure you allow enough extra wood if the bevels project beyond the pattern. Small plywood rowboat and sailboat transoms are often built of the same plywood as the side or bottom panels and have a framework on all four edges. This framework is essential since it is never a good practice to fasten to the end grain of plywood as it has little screw holding ability.

In most boats the transom framework is notched to accept the various longitudinal structural members. Solid lumber transoms are stiffer and take edge fasteners better than plywood, but they should still have framing on the edges for fastening the planking. Edge joining the boards to get the width required for a lumber transom is not hard and can be done with a hand plane. If the transom has a rake, it is usually best to pre-bevel the bottom framing before setting up on the jig. The sides can be beveled after setting up. Outboard motor powered boats need strong transoms with plenty of reinforcing since they must be able to handle the extra weight and forces imparted by the motor.

### Battens

Battens are longitudinal members that add stiffness to plywood hulls. Most often they are located in the bottom but may also be used for stiffening the sides. They are notched into frames, like the keelson.

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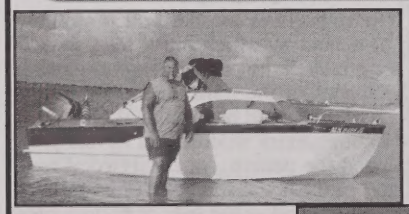

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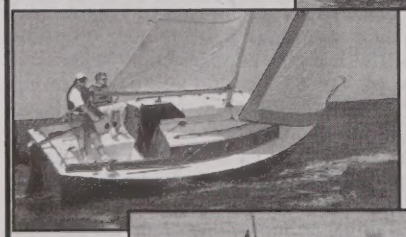

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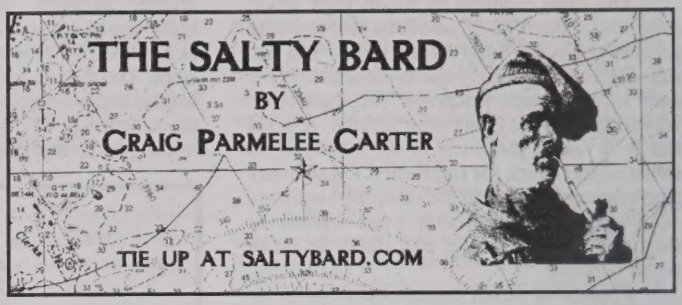



I worked at Mystic Seaport, for a year or two,
aboard the whaleship *Morgan*, the mission to renew.
Many say the ship has ghosts, of that you should not doubt.
All alone in the bottom hold, one day the lights went out.

I stood there in the darkness, the hold was black as night.
I knew there was just one way out and it was not in sight.
I stumbled when I tried to walk, advancing in a crawl.
I feared I'd end up in the bilge - if I were to fall.

I realized I might not be found, 'twas Friday afternoon.
If I didn't want to spend the night, I'd have to get out soon.
I let out a mighty yell as I began to scare.
And very nearly soiled my pants when answered, "Who goes there?"

Motionless, I strained my eyes, still nothing did I see.
I sensed that there was someone there, a chill fell over me.
I heard the footsteps drawing near, the squeaking of the hatch.
Again he called out, "Who goes there?" and then he struck a match.

The light revealed a sailor, clad in 1800s garb.
He pulled my shirt with an old harpoon and hooked it with the barb.
Then looked at me and snarled, "In the name of Jonah, who are you?"
"Some call me the Salty Bard," I said, "How do you do?"

"So you're the Salty Bard!" he laughed, "The pleasure is all mine."
He lowered his harpoon and said, "I read you all the time.
We're all fans aboard this ship, but to me it most relates.
Follow me to the fo'c's'le now, you've got to meet my mates!"

I knew I wasn't dreaming, up the hatchway we did climb.
Could it be I'd met a whaler from another time?
I ducked in to the fo'c's'le, man, you should've seen my face.
Twenty sailors gathered there, splicing the mainbrace.

In the middle of the merriment there lay a sleeping dog.
The sailors danced around him as they passed around the grog.
One handed me a measure, I think that it was James.
They all introduced themselves, but I'm terrible with names.

Two sailors danced the hornpipe, and a fiddler played the tunes.
Another simply slapped his feet and kept the beat with spoons.
One was sitting on his bunk ignoring all the hype,
writing in a diary and smoking a clay pipe.

I saw an old scrimshander; he was working on his craft.
I asked him how much time he'd spent, he looked at me and laughed.
"Time is like an empty page you have to fill," said he.
"And God knows that there's plenty of time when sailing on the sea."

They really were a jolly crew, they didn't have a care.
People come and people go, never knowing they are there.
I asked them why they stayed aboard, did they miss the hunt for whales?
No, they said, 'twas the sea they missed, and handling the sails.

I knew that it was getting late and bid them all farewell.
They'll stay another hundred years as far as I can tell.
So give the devil his due, my friends, these are true seamen.
Rest assured they'll be aboard, when the *Morgan* sails again.

# From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

In my last article I wrote about finishing up an electric pressure washer using a hand tool. The pressure washer became a bit of a problem when I went looking for an extension hose so I could leave the washer on the float while cleaning the boat. I did not want the device on the boat with water running about and spray being blown by the wind. However, a query to the manufacturer/distributor of the washer resulted in the information that they did not sell an extension for the hose. Research on the web found a supplier of such hose for that model of pressure washer. After confirming, through email, that their extension was designed for the washer, I ordered the extension.

Problem! The connection points on the extension were smaller than the connection points on the hose that came with the washer. While the washer and the extension were measured in millimeters, I think writing that one was made for $^{1}/_{2}$" ID/OD and the other was for $^{9}/_{16}$" will get across the idea of the problem. The larger diameter hose that came with the washer would not fit in the smaller diameter extension hose connection and the smaller diameter extension hose would fit in the pressure washer's "gun" connection but would not seal (water everywhere).

After emailing the supplier about the problem, my first thought was to ream out about half the length of the smaller brass connector to allow the larger section to fit snugly and manufacture a sleeve for the other end to get a better fit. Reaming out the brass connector would not be a problem, but creating the sleeve for the gun connection would be an interesting endeavor. However, a member of the yacht club is into specialty machine work and said making a sleeve to fit would not be a problem. The problem was solved when the supplier of the extension hose sent me a replacement with the proper connections. Either the washer manufacturer had changed the size of the connections or the extension supplier had sent the wrong hose initially. In any event, I can now clean the boat with the pressure washer part on the float.

One of the early lessons I had about the use of a GPS unit is that the unit "tells you where the antenna is located, not where you are at that time." This point was illustrated by the speaker quite effectively and it is one of the items I kept in mind while working with GPS coordinates in my electronic mapping projects. A GPS reading can be affected by its projection and datum settings. If you are using a chart created for one type of datum and projection setting and using a GPS unit with another datum and projection setting, you may find a problem with the displayed location when put on the chart.

I was reminded of the bit on the location of the antenna the last time I was out on the boat and the 3D display on the GPS unit put my boat about 8' in the air. The reason for the height reading was the location of the receiving antenna (on top of the cabin roof). I can adjust the reading to put the altitude at 0' or I can simply live with the idea that my boat floats above the water as far as the GPS unit is concerned.

Have you ever "driven" a nail with a steel C-clamp? There are times where there is not enough room to swing a hammer (like when I was installing a new brace to hold the AC filter). Since the second piece of wood (what I was nailing to) needed to hold the nail, I drilled a hole in the first piece the same or one size larger than the nail and slide the nail therein. After I positioned the two pieces as needed, I lined up the screw clamp with the fixed end of the clamp on top of the nail head and tightened the screw end of the clamp. I kept everything lined up and did not hurry and the nail was "driven" into the second piece of wood.

One of my projects is the conversion of a surplus float I was given by a neighbor to hold my skiff. For some reason a 2"x6" was sticking out beyond the vertical boards holding the floatation material, and to re-secure that section I needed to remove the excess lumber. I found a 12" blade for my reciprocal saw that would reach beyond the 2"x8" vertical plank holding the foam and was able to cut off the board at the proper place. Imagine my surprise when the board sank. The various marine growths at the end of the board that had been in the water were sufficient to overcome the buoyancy of the lumber. Since I did not want to leave the object on the bottom, with help of another neighbor and a rake, we were able to "hook" onto the growth and raise the piece until it could be grabbed by hand and retrieved.

While I write about working on things, I do take projects to the marina or have someone come to work on the boat at the dock. They are good people and I can communicate with them (and they with me). How well do you know those in the marina who work on your boat? Do they do the job you want done and can you can talk to them about the job you want done?

When I was studying for my BS in Social Studies Education (a long time ago), one of my teachers noted that the most important person in the school system was the janitor who took care of the classroom. If you were just another teacher, they would do their job and no more. If you were actually friendly and approached them as a person whose help you needed, they would go out of their way to keep things in the classroom as they should be (or a little better).

The same is true of the mechanic who works on your boat's engine, the staff who cleans the hull, rigs the boat for spring launching, etc. I have dealt with a number of marina people over the years and found that they truly appreciate being appreciated. Granted, if they do not do things correctly, you should say something about the problem. But I have found that the non-screaming approach gets quicker and better results than what happens with some of the boat owners who I have seen in action when something goes wrong.

# Both Oars in the Water

By Rodger Swanson

As proprietor of Swanson Boat Company/Oarsman Marine Products, I am pleased to report that I'm now devoting full time to my enterprise. I'd been doing dual duty ("real job" + small business) for many years and decided it was time to cut the corporate strings. I regard this as one of the best decisions I've made. I realized I have enough product interest and orders to keep me afloat. For this first time, I feel I've really got both oars in the water!

Our flagship product is Oarsman Marine Tallow. We are the only US producer of traditional marine tallow and have been making it for 37 years. I was taught how to make and use tallow by my grandfather. That knowledge was called on when I built my first rowboat. John Gardner of Mystic Seaport had agreed to serve as a long distance "coach" for the project. When it came time for me to make the oars, Mr Gardner insisted that they be leathered and that the leathers be seasoned and maintained with tallow. Tallow was to be used as a socket lubricant as well. (The boat, by the way, turned out very well, including "moving smartly under oars.")

Oarsman Tallow

This experience gave me a true appreciation of how traditional products and practices can benefit activities in the present. This prompted a thorough study and use of oars made from the 1880s down to those currently being produced. It brought home the wisdom of selecting a boat design suited to the waters in which it was to be used, the uses to which it would be put and the strengths and deficits of the oarsman. The result is a conscious "custom fit" approach where all aspects of design selection, materials, building, finishing and outfitting are a coherent, integrated process whereby the customer ends up with the combination best suited to them.

I don't presume to have all the answers. When I don't know, I seek out those who do. My network of like minded craftsman has proven to be an invaluable asset over the years. I am particularly appreciative of help from Walter Simmons of Duck Trap Woodworking, Steve Holt of Shaw & Tenney Oar and Paddle Company, Fred Ebinger of F.H. Ebinger Company, Benjamin A.G. Fuller with the Penobscot Marine Museum, Clint Chase at the Landing School, Graham McKay with Lowell's Boat Shop, Walter Baron of the Old Wharf Dory Company, Steve Kaulback of Adirondack Guideboats, Andy Strode, Walter Wales and Sam Manning. Eric and Nick Schade get their ears bent regularly, as well.

While the marine tallow continues to be our mainstay, our offerings have expanded considerably. Working with customers to properly fit out their boats, I concluded that a significant problem was locating items of good quality. In addition, logic pointed to meeting as many needs as possible at a single source. With our emphasis on traditional rowing, it made sense to start with oars and work from there.

Oars: These days, competently made stock oars of sound design are rare almost to the point of non existence. An exception are the Quallicum Oars produced by Barkley Sound Oar and Paddle, Ltd of Quallicum, British Columbia. Made of selected Sitka spruce, they are of effective design and well made. An excellent choice for recreational rowing, they are sufficiently robust to stand up for a bit of real work as well. Currently, SBC is offering 6'6" flat blade oars and 7'6" and 8' spoon blade versions.

Leathers: Examining and using oars produced over the past 145 years indicated that the type performing the best and lasting the longest was oak or vegetable tanned full grain leather. Tallow was definitely the most effective choice for seasoning and maintaining the leathers, besides serving as a socket lubricant. Maine Thread Company's waxed polycord lacing was the closest match to traditional materials. Pete Culler was adamant about long (12"-14") leathers being a requirement. They provide the best protection for the oar looms and help the oarsman avoid "rowing off the leathers" when in difficult conditions.

Leathers & Tallow

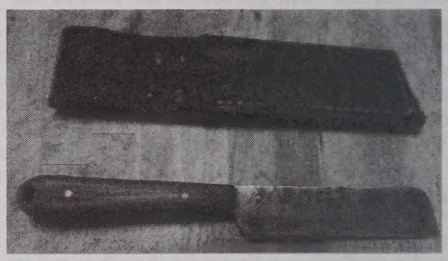
Oar Collars

Their Captain's Choice Premium Long Leathers Kit features 6½"x14" vegetable-tanned panels, waxed polycord lacing, harness needles, two strap for buttons, cloth tape measure, thonging "punch," hose clamp for setting buttons, Oarsman Marine Tallow Basic Packet and instructions. It's the most complete oar leather kit on the market.

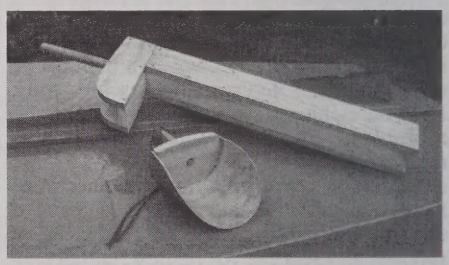
The Recreational Rower's Kit is the same as the Captain's Choice, except for the panels being chrome tanned leather.

The Utility Kit is intended strictly for short oars common to dinghies, prams, punts and harbor workboats. Includes chrome-tanned panels, button straps, hose clamp, harness needles, lacing and instructions.

Hardware and Rowlocks: Traditional horned oarlocks and side and top mount sockets in silicon bronze, Douglas Oarlocks for the "fixed pitch" rower (plus Martinoli Sleeves to fit roundshaft 1¾" diameter oar loom), hand turned wooden Lunenberg style straight shaft as well as tapered tholepins for the purist. The most recent additions to this category are authentically cast St Lawrence River Skiff Rowlocks in both the "Lily Pad" and plain pin styles. It's not likely you'll find this scarce item anywhere else.



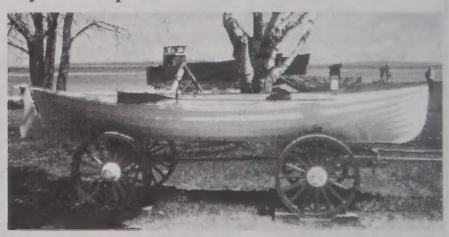
Rigger's Knife



Thirsty Jack with Bailer

Nantucket Sounder sounding leads, a true premium product. They come with a complementary tin of Oarsman Ship's Tallow. How salty can you get?

Last But Not Least: The project on the drawing boards I find the most exciting is the development of a 16' Mackinaw Rowboat. I took the lines from an original built in 1910 at St Ignace, Michigan, by Charles Dagwell, a marine reporter and weatherman. Messing about with the project are Walter Baron (Old Wharf Dory Company), John Stuart (Arbor Vitae Woodworking) and Steve Holt (Shaw & Tenney). Goal is to have a prototype water-ready in time for the WoodenBoat Show at Mystic Seaport.



Meanwhile, a good time's being had by all.

For the complete offerings, please go to our website at www.oarsmanmarinetallow.com or give me a call at (860) 299-6502 or email me at rodgerswanson412@comcast.net. We are located at 420 Broad St, Windsor, CT 06095.

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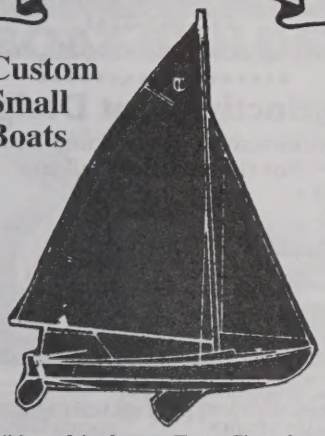

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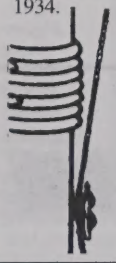

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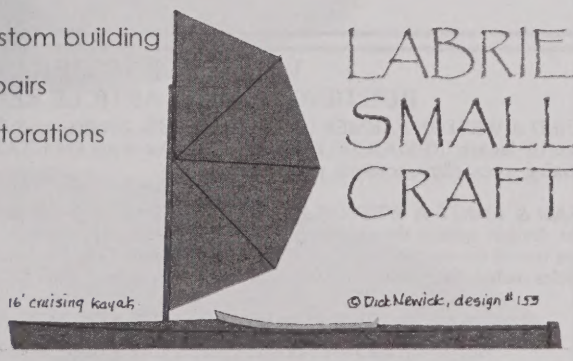


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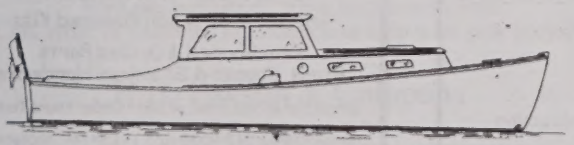

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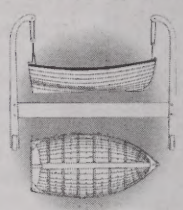

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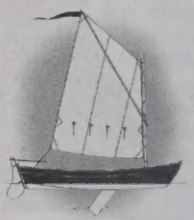

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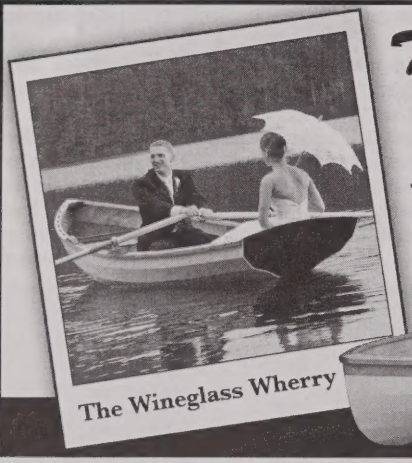

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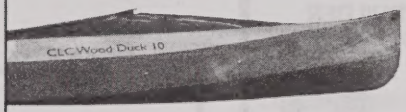


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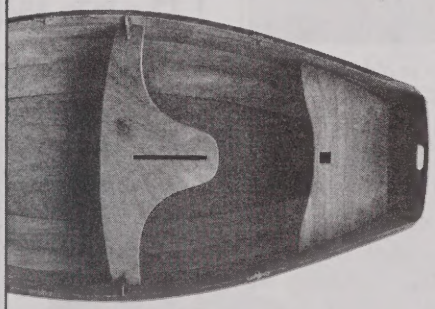
Chesapeake 17LT

Shearwater 17



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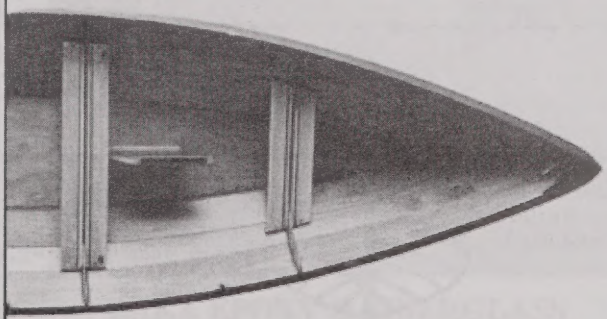

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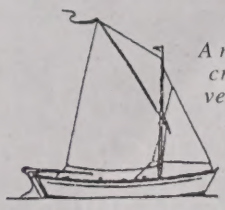

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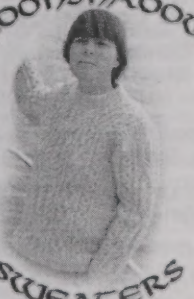

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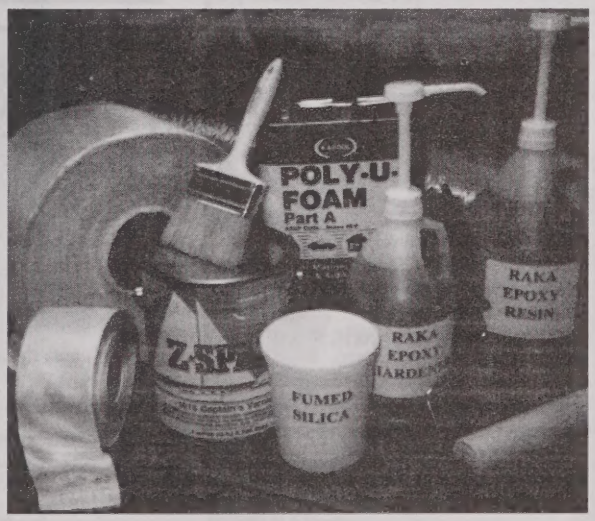


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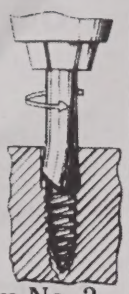

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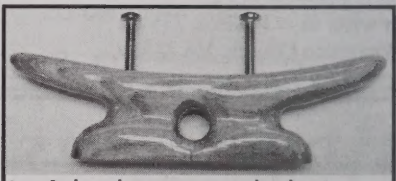

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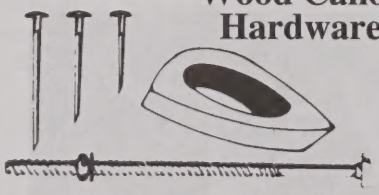

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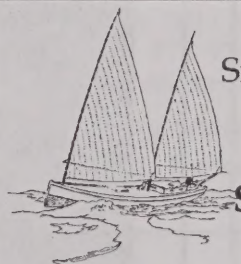

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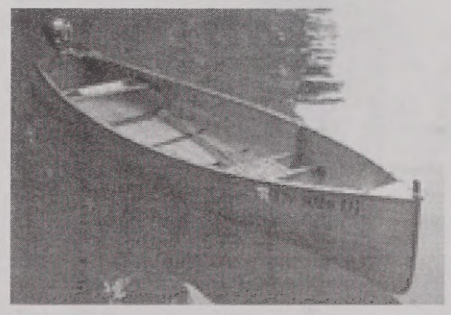

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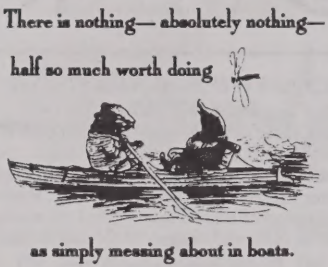


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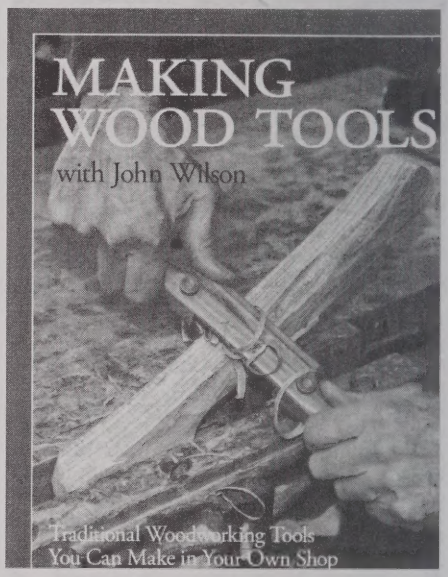


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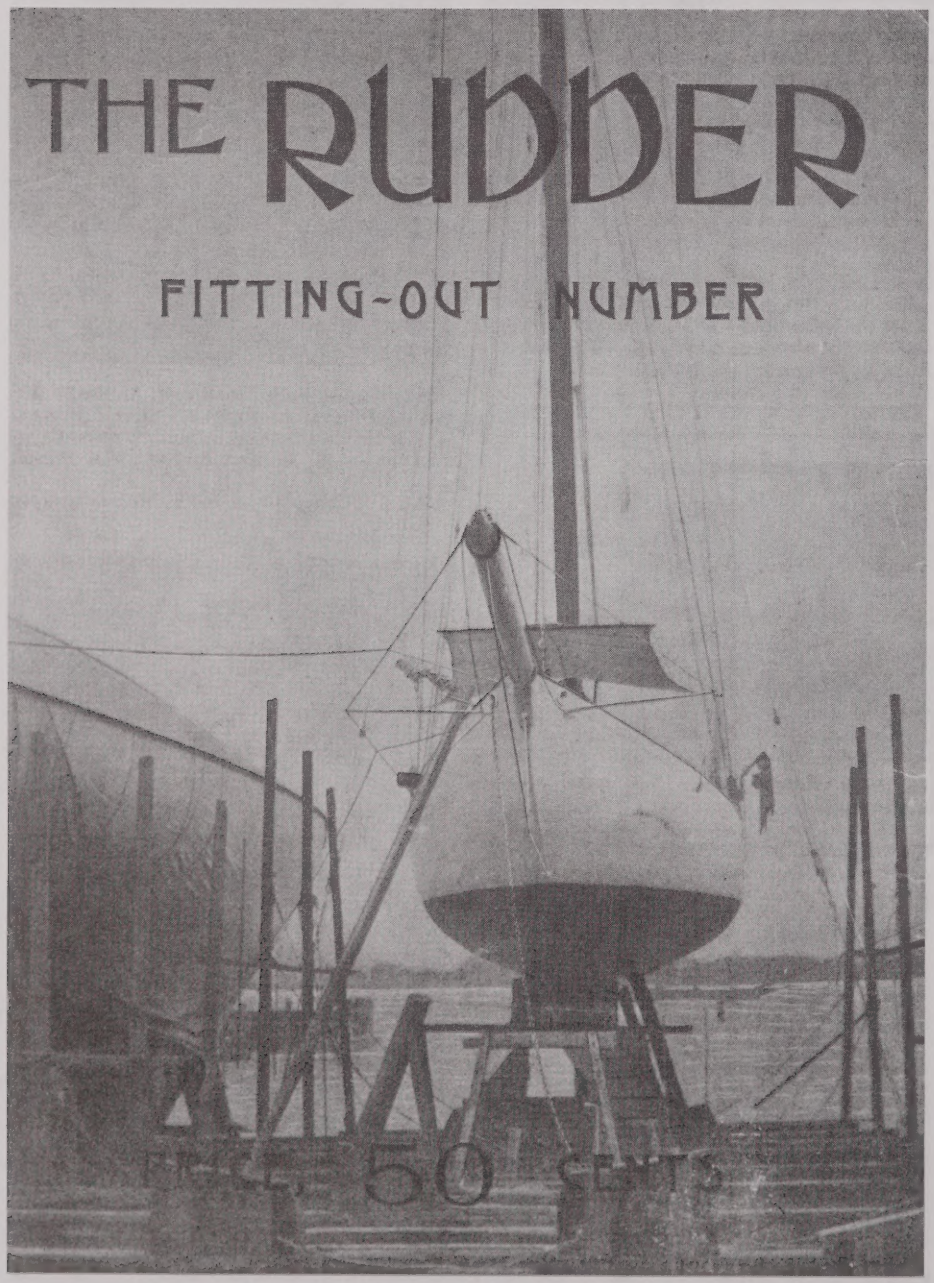

# Shiver Me Timbers

*By: Robert L. Summers*

## Do It Yourselfers!

I HAVE TO REPLACE THIS BENT PROPELLER BUT THE CASTLE NUT IS RUSTED TIGHT AND WON'T BUDGE!
DID YOU SPRAY IT WITH PENETRATING OIL, THEN TAP IT USING A SMALL HAMMER?...
...NEXT A SIX-POINT SOCKET, PIPE WRENCH, OR SOME LOCKING PLIERS MIGHT WORK....
...OF COURSE IF ALL ELSE FAILS, TRY LOOSENING THE NUT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!
HEY BUDDY! YOU FORGOT TO CAST OFF YOUR WINDWARD BOW LINE....
KERPPURRRR
KERCHUNK
...REMEMBER THAT WINDWARD BOW LINE?... IT'S NOW WRAPPED AROUND THE PROP....
... ONE DAMN THING AFTER ANOTHER....
...SAME DAMN THING OVER AND OVER!
ONE THING I HATE ABOUT WINTER IS SIPHONING OUT GAS BEFORE PUTTING EQUIPMENT INTO STORAGE....
WHY DON'T YOU TRY USING A PORTABLE SHOP VACUUM FOR THAT?
FUEL
FAZOOM
SLURRP
SPARK
OH NO!
...AS I WAS TOPPING-OFF THE TANK, FUEL SPLASHED ALL OVER....
...PLEASE SEE IF THERE IS ANOTHER SHIRT IN MY GYM BAG WHILE I GO INSIDE AND PAY....
...SORRY FOLKS, IF YOU SMELL GAS IT'S ME!

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We urge you, if you are within a reasonable distan to come up to our shop and splash a boat. Nothin gives the sense of a boat like sitting in it, pulling the oars and watching the shore pull away at grea speed. When we had dealers, one of them said, "Have you ever noticed the '3 stroke grin?'

On our website we now have a tab 'boat specials' .... it is located right below the 'request a catalog' tab. If you go there you can see what used or refurbished boats we have in stock and their prices.

This is one of our favorite photos. A customer in Vermont built this boat from one of our kits....but he got stuck at the finishing stage. Ian went up and helped him complete the boat.....a retirement present to himself and to his grandchildren. What we particularly enjoy about the photo is the golden slant of the afternoon sun on the cherry and the honey-to-different-grades-of-maple-syrup colors of the Western Red Cedar. Shoot us an e-mail and we'll send you a hi-res color version of this photo.